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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Miss Carolyn Scrutton
Headteacher
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Norfolk Road
Dorking
Surrey
RH4 3JA

Dear Miss Scrutton

Short inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 23 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 October 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Senior leaders are particularly effective. You have an accurate, reflective and honest view of the school's strengths and priorities. You look in detail at what you know about pupils' progress and ask pertinent questions of yourselves as leaders about how standards could be even higher. Your plans for improvement are clear because you know what is working well in the school and where things can be even better.

You, the staff and governors take your church foundation very seriously. Pupils have taken on board your school values, which are closely linked to those of the Roman Catholic church. Pupils are polite and kind to each other and to the adults they work with. They work hard, with very positive attitudes, taking considerable pride and care in their work. Pupils respect each other's ideas and collaborate very well together.

Staff, parents, pupils and governors are all highly appreciative of your inclusive approach and hold you in high regard. Parents are generally very positive about the school. Many of those who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire spoke of how happy their children are. They commented on how much their children enjoy coming to school. They particularly value the school's welcoming ethos and that, 'There is a real sense of community about the school and every child is valued.'

Since the previous inspection, pupils, including those from vulnerable groups, have continued to make good or better progress, particularly in reading and writing. As a

result, many achieve standards above those expected for their age. This is because the quality of teaching and learning has been consistently strong over time. However, in 2017, the progress measure in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 fell slightly in comparison to the previous year. In key stage 1, the number of pupils meeting expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with national averages. In the Year 1 phonics screening check, results have risen over the past three years to above the national average.

The curriculum in the early years is broad and designed to cater for the interests of boys and girls. The outside learning environment is well-resourced and provides many opportunities for children to learn. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the early years is rising year on year, but remains just below the national average.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Pre-employment checks and vetting and recruitment practices comply with regulations. Staff receive advice and information about safeguarding as part of their induction. This means that staff are well informed and know about the school's processes for keeping pupils safe. Systems to ensure that all adults receive the training they need are efficient and managed well. A good example of this is the regular opportunity to discuss safeguarding at weekly or fortnightly staff meetings.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They know what bullying is and say that this is very rare in the school. If it happens, pupils, staff and the majority of parents agree that this is resolved well. Pupils trust staff and can explain how to keep safe in different situations, including when working online. You also provide parents with useful information, such as guidance to help parents keep their children safe on the internet.

Governors regularly check the effectiveness of the school's work to keep pupils safe. Governors have completed safer recruitment training, putting their skills and expertise to good effect during recent recruitment processes.

Inspection findings

- During this visit, as well as evaluating safeguarding arrangements, I focused on the measures in place to ensure that all pupils in Key Stage 2 make consistently strong progress in mathematics from their individual starting points. I looked at provision in the early years and at the progress made by the youngest children. I looked at your curriculum and how you make it accessible to all pupils. I also considered whether leaders use funding effectively to ensure the best outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, as well as the effectiveness of governance.
- In 2016 and 2017, Year 6 pupils' progress was broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Progress in mathematics had, however, dropped slightly in 2017. Leaders had identified mathematics as an area for development and have significantly changed the approach to teaching

methods alongside providing effective training for all staff. The impact of this work is evident in lessons and in pupils' work and attitudes towards the subject. Pupils are developing the use of the language of reasoning, but this is not yet consistent in all classes. In some mathematics lessons, pupils need to be challenged more quickly to apply their knowledge and understanding.

- The provision for children to learn and develop in the Reception Year is engaging and inviting. Children are keen to explore and discuss their learning. However, the evidence used to make assessments is not always robust and thorough. You have identified this as an area for development. You have plans to introduce a system that will enable the early years staff to make detailed observations of what children are achieving against the early years foundation stage (EYFS) objectives. You have also invested in external support to improve standards in the early years, which is expected to start this term.
- While recognising the importance of English and mathematics, you are very clear in your belief that the curriculum should be wide and varied. In this way, you ensure that the curriculum at your school provides a genuinely enriching experience for all pupils. In particular, art work around the school is of a very high quality. Pupils are confident to talk about their work and are particularly keen to talk about the opportunities they have to develop their creative skills. You offer a variety of extra-curricular activities and pupils are particularly motivated by school trips. A Year 4 pupil explained that history 'made much more sense' after a recent trip to a museum. The school's buildings and setting provide challenges for you to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged or unable to access the curriculum. You do this through thoughtful and planned adjustments. The leadership team and staff pride themselves on being an inclusive school for all pupils.
- The small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in each year group have made it difficult for you to identify trends over time in attainment and progress. There is no doubt that you know each of these individual pupils extremely well and that their well-being is a focus for the additional funding that you receive. You have identified any potential barriers to learning that these pupils may encounter and you provide appropriate support. You involve the pupils in discussing and understanding their learning, and governors monitor the support they are receiving. The new system that you have introduced this year to track pupils' progress is helping teachers to meet the learning needs of any disadvantaged pupils in their class effectively. However, while individual pupil progress information is carefully tracked and monitored, the overall outcomes for this group of pupils is not always clear. You agreed that you and other leaders, including governors, need to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are a high priority for everyone in the school.
- Governors take effective action to hold leaders to account, asking challenging questions and carrying out regular monitoring visits. During the inspection, I decided to follow up governors' understanding of their duty to ensure that the school's website is compliant with statutory requirements. Many aspects of the

school's website are very informative. This helps leaders share important information with parents, who are mostly very pleased with the communication they receive from the school. However, governors are aware that some elements of the website are missing or not working, such as information about the school's curriculum. This limits parents' ability to check how effectively the school is supporting their children. You are taking the necessary steps to replace the website so that parents are fully informed of the work of the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils make better progress in mathematics through providing more consistent challenge in lessons across Key Stage 2
- more precise information is gathered to inform and support assessments in the early years
- the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are carefully analysed, so that the governing body has a better understanding of the impact of additional funding for these pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Marcia Goodwin
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and senior leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority. I met with a group of pupils from Years 1 to 6 and spoke with many other pupils informally. I observed learning across the school jointly with senior leaders. I looked at examples of pupils' work and spoke with pupils during lessons. I scrutinised a variety of documents, including leaders' own evaluation of the school's work, records of checks that leaders make on the suitability of staff to work with children, and information relating to the curriculum. I took account of responses to questionnaires from 103 pupils and 19 staff. I also considered 59 responses from parents to the Ofsted online survey Parent View, including free-text comments.