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Miss Clare O'Connor  
Headteacher  
St Edward's Catholic Primary School  
Lisson Grove  
London  
NW1 6LH

Dear Miss O'Connor

### **Short inspection of St Edward's Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 25 September 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 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

You have created a welcoming school and have reviewed how the space is used to ensure that the environment is well organised and supports learning opportunities well. For example, you have moved the early years department to enable children to have direct access to the outdoor learning space.

Pupils maintain positive relationships. You promote an awareness of how to tackle problems well, such as through anti-bullying week. Relationships in the classrooms and the playground are positive. The playground is well organised, with a high staff ratio and a range of activities to keep pupils occupied. Staff are vigilant and engage well with pupils.

The leadership team has clearly defined areas of responsibility and is committed to school improvement. You work well with the local authority to evaluate the effectiveness of the school. However, the processes for school self-evaluation need to be more thorough in order to achieve an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning.

Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support learning and they engage well with the pupils.

You have a clear system for tracking pupils' progress to enable appropriate targets to be set. In key stage 2, progress in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national averages in 2018. Leaders do not use assessment information effectively enough to inform priorities for improvement and identify where pupils might be falling behind.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Procedures to keep pupils safe are effective and understood by staff and pupils. As a result, pupils report that they are happy at the school and any concerns are followed up quickly to make sure that pupils feel supported.

Pupils are kept informed about what to do if they have any worries and they told me they are confident about reporting any concerns to staff.

### **Inspection findings**

- The first key line of enquiry we agreed to consider was how effectively leaders had addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection. We looked at whether teachers now consistently set work that challenges the most able pupils.
- Leaders have implemented a revised system for feedback across the school that encourages pupils to respond to comments from the teacher. It also provides opportunities for pupils to share their work with their peers. However, the impact of this policy on pupils' progress is variable and greater focus is needed to ensure that pupils make use of the guidance provided to move their learning forward.
- Work in pupils' books and visits to lessons showed that lessons do not consistently challenge pupils. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. In some cases, pupils are not moved on swiftly enough and they lose focus on their learning.
- The second line of enquiry we agreed to consider was attendance and persistent absence. Attendance has been below the national average for the last three years. In 2017, the rate of persistent absence increased.
- The school is working to ensure that all families understand and support the attendance policy. The systems for checking on pupils who are absent are robust. Leaders have a secure understanding of the difficulties some families face, and work effectively with external agencies to support families and challenge low attendance. Governors monitor attendance figures each term and discuss ways to improve rates of attendance with school leaders, both at governing body meetings and on their visits to school.
- You have introduced a number of incentives, such as cinema afternoons, for those with attendance at 98% and above to promote good attendance, and you share attendance rates through the newsletter. Early evidence from this term shows that the strategies are having a positive impact, but you recognise that there is further work to do on attendance to sustain this improvement.

- Another line of enquiry for the inspection was to review the actions leaders have taken to ensure that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, build on the higher-than-national-average outcomes at key stage 1 in order to secure strong progress in key stage 2. This was because the progress for some groups of pupils was lower than for similar groups nationally for the past two years.
- While systems are in place to track progress, they do not take sufficient account of pupils' starting points. You accept that a sharper focus on this progress measure is required. The school improvement priorities are not clearly enough aligned to their impact on pupils' progress.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the leadership of teaching and learning is sharply focused on the progress of pupils to ensure that they are consistently challenged in their learning and are sufficiently guided on their next steps
- they align school improvement priorities to their impact on pupils' progress, especially across key stage 2
- they build on the improvements in attendance to ensure that no pupils are disadvantaged by high levels of absence from school.

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

Helen Rai  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the inclusion leader and the school business manager responsible for updating the single central record. I spoke to the chair of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I visited classes from Nursery to Year 6 together with you, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher to observe teaching and to look at pupils' work. I reviewed a selection of pupils' work. I spent time in the playground talking to pupils and I spoke to a group of parents and carers at the start of the school day. I reviewed the responses from parents, staff and pupils to the Ofsted online surveys. I analysed 30 responses from parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. I evaluated a range of documentation related to leadership and management of the school and the

school's website. I also considered school attendance information and pupils' progress information.