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Clare Walsh
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Walsh

Short inspection of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 15 January 2019, 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 January 2015.

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 built an effective team that shares your ambition for continued improvement. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and where further improvements are needed. You have focused time and resources to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning. Through collaboration with other schools, you and your team have put in place effective actions, which have led to improved pupil outcomes in all areas. Leaders display a genuine willingness to learn and develop professionally. Staff have implemented effectively the school improvement actions that leaders have introduced. As a result, pupils at Mount Carmel Primary School make good progress in their learning over time.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They talked about the many learning experiences their teachers plan for them, which they appreciate. Pupils take pride in their sporting achievements. They talked about the many events they excel in, as they compete with other schools in the borough. Pupils are positive about the quality of education they receive from school.

Parents are complimentary about the school. They appreciate the information they receive from you about their children's progress and said it is timely and helpful. They say that, 'Mount Carmel is a very nurturing and safe environment where each child is encouraged to shine.'

You work effectively with a committed and knowledgeable governing body. Governors work hard to ensure that they have credible information to offer support and challenge to the

school. They have a good understanding of how well the school performs. Through regular monitoring, governors ensure that the actions leaders have taken have an impact on pupils' outcomes. Governance is determined that pupils achieve well, academically and in their personal development.

During the previous inspection, you were asked to raise the attainment of most-able pupils in writing and mathematics. School leaders have since reviewed the way in which mathematics is taught across the school. They have put in place actions to ensure that pupils, including the most able, are stretched and challenged. As a result, in 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard was above the national average. Leaders, however, need to ensure that a higher proportion of pupils achieve the higher standard in writing at key stage 2.

Safeguarding is effective

Leaders and governors have developed an effective safeguarding culture. They have implemented a comprehensive range of policies and procedures designed to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils. Staff receive appropriate training at regular intervals. Records show staff are vigilant in identifying any safeguarding concerns and are prompt in reporting them to the relevant staff. Records relating to the safeguarding of pupils are detailed, organised and fit for purpose.

In cases where pupils require extended levels of support from external agencies, leaders have been proactive and vigilant in their communications and record-keeping. The safeguarding governor plays an important role in holding leaders to account. The single central record of staff checks is comprehensive and there is evidence that safer recruitment procedures are in place.

Pupils said they feel safe at school. They talked about how staff ensure that the school site is secure and about how they keep themselves safe at home, at school, or when online.

Inspection findings

- During our initial discussion, we agreed to look at reading as a key line of enquiry. This was because progress made by pupils in this subject was significantly above the national average, both in 2017 and 2018.
- Leaders have invested heavily in training and resources to ensure that pupils have high-quality learning experiences in reading. Staff in the early years are well trained to help children develop their early reading skills. Teachers and additional adults teach phonics effectively. They are prompt in identifying pupils who need additional support to make strong progress in their reading. As a result, the proportion of pupils meeting the required standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has been higher than the national average for the past three years. Pupils continue to make strong progress so that by the end of key stage 1 more pupils than nationally meet and exceed the expected standards in reading.
- The teaching of reading is strong across the school. In key stage 2, pupils have well-developed comprehension skills. This is because teachers provide them with plenty of opportunities to engage with texts at a deeper level. Teachers' effective questioning

probes pupils' understanding of texts. Teachers plan activities which enable pupils to develop skills of deduction and inference.

- Leaders have developed high-quality reading materials across the school. This has resulted in pupils developing a genuine enthusiasm for reading. Consequently, by the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils who met and exceeded the expected standards in reading in 2017 and 2018 was significantly above national average.
- We also looked at writing in key stage 2. This was because, over the past three years, the progress of pupils in this subject has not been as strong as their progress in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders have identified writing as a priority for improvement. They worked hard to identify exactly the issues that needed to be addressed to improve pupils' writing. Acting on guidance from leaders, teachers have focused on providing pupils with plenty of opportunities to develop the technical skills necessary to produce writing which meets expected standards for their age. As a result, pupils across key stage 2 are more accurate in their spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and provide timely and effective advice for improvement. Pupils act on guidance from adults and, over time, make strong progress in writing. However, pupils are not consistent in using ambitious vocabulary in their writing. Teachers need to ensure that pupils are challenged further so that a higher proportion of them achieve the higher standard.
- Finally, we considered whether pupils achieve in the wider curriculum as well as they do in reading, writing, and mathematics. Leaders provide pupils with a variety of experiences. In their religious education lessons, for example, pupils develop an understanding of different faiths and learn about the values of acceptance and tolerance. They apply this in the way they treat each other, and in the positive manner in which they relate to adults in school.
- Pupils' experience of the curriculum is enriched by additional activities, including educational visits, talks from experts including a visit from a local doctor, and school assemblies. They appreciate the support they receive from specialist sports coaches, which enhances their physical education lessons. Teachers implement a well-thought-out curriculum that helps pupils to develop skills and knowledge across a range of subjects. However, leaders need to ensure that pupils receive plentiful opportunities to improve their art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture, using a range of materials.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- Teachers challenge pupils to use ambitious vocabulary so that a higher proportion of them achieve the higher standard in writing at key stage 2
- Pupils receive opportunities to improve their art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture, using a range of materials.

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 Ealing. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Edison David
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection I discussed the work of the school with you and with members of the senior leadership team. I spoke to a number of pupils to discuss their experiences in lessons, the extent to which they feel safe, and their views on learning and behaviour. I held discussions with a representative of the local authority. I considered 108 responses to the parent survey, 16 responses to the staff survey, and 121 responses to the pupil survey. I also spoke to parents in the playground. I met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. I considered documentation provided by the school, and information posted on the school's website. I looked at the single central record of staff suitability checks, and the school's analysis of pupils' attendance. Together with school leaders, I visited classes to observe learning, and I looked at samples of pupils' work across all subjects. I listened to pupils read from across the ability range.