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Mrs Lesley Ritchie
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Ritchie

Short inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 March 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 October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection.

Since your appointment in September 2016, you have built upon the existing strengths of the school. You have focused your attention on establishing a culture in which all pupils enjoy learning and make good progress. To achieve this, you have the support of a highly skilled governing body and of a committed leadership team.

You and the staff make sure that the school's caring ethos is at the heart of everything it does. The school serves a diverse community that includes a number of families from abroad, some of whom only stay in this country for a few years. Consequently, the school has developed effective strategies to support pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school's international dimension contributes to its popularity. It also helps to reinforce the culture of inclusion and tolerance that is part of the school's core values.

Pupils are articulate and confident. They enjoy school because of the pleasant learning environment and the variety of learning activities they do as part of the curriculum. The after-school clubs and other extra-curricular activities the school provides are also very popular. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive.

In conversations held during the inspection, and in responses to the online Ofsted survey, Parent View, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the school. Nurturing and a strong community spirit were common themes in the comments of

parents and carers, which included, 'It is a warm, nurturing environment' and, 'The school team, fostered by the school leadership, seems truly to consider the needs of each child in the school.'

Historically, the attainment of pupils at both key stages 1 and 2 has been consistently high. However, progress was more variable, especially at key stage 2. You introduced a rigorous system to track the progress of each pupil so that issues could be identified and addressed swiftly. You are aware of the need to continue to develop this system with a heightened focus enough on disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils.

You are implementing a new curriculum, designed to further develop pupils' engagement and breadth of learning. Staff and pupils are very positive about this new approach to teaching. The curriculum has now to be fully embedded to build upon its successful implementation.

The school is successfully tackling the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. It has addressed the issue about middle leadership. It continues to address the need to ensure that pupils are given work that matches their abilities, in particular in relation to meeting the needs of disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. As the school's designated safeguarding lead, you are determined to create a safe environment for all and to provide the best possible support for vulnerable pupils. You work well with families and external agencies to protect children when serious concerns are raised. The detailed records you keep show that you take swift and effective actions when required.

Staff receive regular training and are frequently reminded of the need to be vigilant. Parents are confident in the quality of care the school provides and trust the staff to keep their children safe.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when they use the internet or social media. They trust the staff and know who they can talk to in confidence should they have concerns.

Inspection findings

- Many children join the Reception class with levels of development that are higher than what is typical for their age, especially in the areas of language and communication. The induction process helps them, and their parents, to quickly adjust to the requirements of the early years provision. An effective initial assessment of children's skills and abilities allows staff to address their development needs accurately. As a result, children make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.

- Teaching in key stage 1 is effective. Teachers actively encourage pupils to read widely and often. Pupils are required to read every day. They have access to a large selection of books in their classrooms and in the well-resourced and widely used library. The teaching of phonics provides pupils with the necessary skills and resilience to deal with unfamiliar texts. The increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from targeted support to develop their vocabulary and reading comprehension skills. Standards in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 are high.
- Pupils make more consistent progress in key stage 2 than they used to. This is because teachers make effective use of the information they gather, through the assessment system introduced to identify pupils who need extra help. Interventions to support pupils who are not progressing as much as they should are timely and effective. The assessment system also allows teachers and support staff to have a sharper focus on the most able pupils as well as on disadvantaged pupils, whose progress in the past was not as good as that of other pupils.
- A key recommendation of the previous inspection report was to strengthen the role of middle leaders and their impact on the quality of teaching. The current subject and phase leaders have all been appointed over the last three years and are contributing effectively to your improvement agenda. They work well as a team to plan the teaching of the new curriculum. For example, they make sure that opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills are clearly identified across the subjects. They check on the quality of teaching and support the professional development of their colleagues.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the rigorous assessment of pupils' learning they have implemented continues to lead to increased progress for all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils
- the new curriculum is fully embedded so that it prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education and further develops their positive attitudes to learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Patrick Amieli
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, senior leaders and middle leaders. I met with the chair, vice-chair and two other members of the governing body. I had a discussion with a group of pupils and spoke to other pupils informally. I listened to pupils read. Together with you, I observed teaching in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. I spoke to parents at the start and the end of the day and considered the 97 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also considered the 20 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

I scrutinised various documents including the school's self-evaluation, its improvement plan and the documents that are used to check the quality of teaching. We discussed the national test results and assessments undertaken by pupils in 2018 as well as the attainment of current pupils. I also looked at the published information on the school's website, as well as minutes of governing body meetings and information about attendance, behaviour and safety.