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Mr Wendell Gopaul  
Headteacher  
St Anne's Catholic Primary School  
Lowe Street  
Camp Hill  
Birmingham  
West Midlands  
B12 0ER

Dear Mr Gopaul

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

Following my visit to the school on 5 June 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 May 2015.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since taking up the position of headteacher in January 2017, you and your leadership team have quickly secured the necessary improvements to ensure that the school remains a vibrant, purposeful place in which to learn. The school is rightly proud of its distinctive Catholic ethos. You, your governors and staff share a vision of 'seeing God's light in every child' and this underpins everything you do. Consequently, St Anne's School is a caring, happy place to be.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful towards adults and each other. In every class we visited, pupils demonstrated highly positive attitudes to learning. The work in pupils' books shows that they take pride in their work and want to do their best. The curriculum has been well thought out to ensure it meets the learning needs of your pupils. It is broad, rich, engaging and aims to provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities and memorable learning experiences.

Governors are very supportive of the school. They are diligent and understand their role. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, they are not always provided with enough information about how successfully leaders' actions are improving outcomes for pupils. This means that they are not able to challenge leaders well enough on this aspect of the school's performance.

The recommendations from the school's previous inspection report have been partly met.

You and your leaders have improved the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. There have been several changes to the teaching staff since the previous inspection. New and existing staff have been provided with appropriate training and support. This has resulted in the establishment of a stable, effective team that shares your commitment to ensuring pupils receive the best possible standards of education. There is still more to be done, however, to ensure that teaching is consistently strong, so that more pupils are able to make the progress in reading, writing and mathematics of which they are capable.

The previous inspection found that senior leaders were not being supported as well as they could have been. This has been rectified by providing additional training and support. Leaders at all levels now play an active role in all aspects of the school's work.

The outdoor learning area has undergone significant improvement and now provides a rich source of additional activities for children in Reception. These include a mud kitchen, climbing equipment and a dedicated writing area, to encourage children to write. These actions have contributed to the improved outcomes for children seen at the end of their Reception year.

Relationships between pupils, parents and staff are positive. The overwhelming majority of parents who shared their views during this inspection are happy with the quality of education their children receive and the caring, nurturing environment that has been created. Staff feel well supported and respected by leaders and appreciate that their well-being is considered important.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and the website contains the required information. Leaders, including governors, have ensured safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and have established an effective safeguarding culture. All staff are provided with appropriate, up-to-date training and, as a result, they are knowledgeable of the procedures for keeping children safe and what to do if they have any concerns. Records held are sufficiently detailed, well maintained and stored appropriately. Support and advice from other professionals are sought where necessary. Referrals are made in a timely way and followed up appropriately. All the necessary procedures are followed during the recruitment of staff.

The pupils I spoke to demonstrated a clear knowledge and understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. For example, they have a good knowledge of how to stay safe when using the internet. They also have an age-appropriate understanding of a range of different types of bullying and what to do if it happens to them. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for in school.

Leaders work well with parents, establishing effective relationships to ensure that those who are experiencing challenges are well supported. This is confirmed by comments made by parents in the Ofsted free-text service.

### **Inspection findings**

- On taking up the headship of the school, you carried out a detailed analysis of the quality of provision across the school. You identified that the systems used to assess the progress made by pupils were not secure enough to enable reliable judgements to be made. You quickly established a system of regular monitoring that enables leaders to evaluate the school's strengths accurately and identify appropriate improvement priorities.
- The school's current improvement plans show that priorities are clearly linked to outcomes for groups of pupils and plainly set out the actions that need to be completed. Regular checks of teaching and learning are carried out and the information gathered by leaders demonstrates that these actions are resulting in improved outcomes for pupils. However, this information is not communicated clearly enough to governors to enable them to measure how successfully leaders are achieving these actions. Consequently, governors are not able to hold leaders robustly to account for this aspect of the school's work.
- Children enter Reception working at levels below those typical for their age. As a result of effective teaching and learning, they make strong progress and the majority of them achieve a good level of development by the end of the year. The school's own assessment information shows that the proportion of children currently achieving a good level of development matches that seen nationally. In addition to this, the proportion of children who are working above the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of their Reception year is higher than that seen nationally. Children are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Phonics provision in Reception and Year 1 is strong. Published information for 2018 shows that the proportion of pupils achieving the phonics standard at the end of Year 1 was just above the national figure. Pupils continue to make good progress in reading through key stage 1. However, progress in reading through key stage 2 is not strong enough. This is because some pupils, particularly middle-prior-attaining pupils, do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders have identified the reasons for this and have taken action to remedy the situation. These actions include training teachers to provide more effective support to pupils to enable them to develop higher-order reading skills, such as inference and deduction. The school's own assessment of reading progress shows that these actions are beginning to have an impact and that pupils, including those in the middle-prior-attaining group, are now making more rapid progress in reading. There is still more to do, however, to ensure these pupils continue to make good progress and achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Progress in writing in key stage 2, although average, has fallen over the last three years. In response to this, you and your leadership team have implemented a range of strategies aimed at improving standards in writing. These include ensuring pupils are given sufficient opportunities to write independently, at length and making sure that the evidence used to monitor progress in writing is reliable and accurate. The writing curriculum has also been adapted to enable pupils to develop core writing skills from an early age, with a range of non-negotiable skills being identified for each year group.
- Through observations of teaching and learning, you identified that teaching is not

always matched well enough to the needs of pupils, particularly for lower- and middle-prior-attaining pupils. This is because teachers do not always make sure pupils have the skills and understanding they need in order to complete the activities set. We also saw evidence of this during our visits to the classrooms. The school's own assessment information shows that standards in writing are beginning to improve as a result of the actions taken. However, this is not yet consistent across key stage 2, or rapid enough to ensure that pupils are able to achieve the standards of which they are capable.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers make sure pupils have the skills and knowledge they need in order to complete the activities set so that all pupils, including lower and middle attainers, are able to make the progress of which they are capable
- in reading, teachers continue to improve pupils' understanding and use of vocabulary, including subject-specific vocabulary
- governors are provided with information about how well the actions taken by leaders are impacting on outcomes for pupils, so that they are able to hold leaders fully to account.

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

Yours sincerely

Janet Satchwell  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

With you, I visited classrooms and looked at examples of pupils' work. I examined a wide range of documentation, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation document and records of safeguarding. Throughout the inspection, I held discussions with you and your senior leadership team, including the designated safeguarding lead. I met with four members of the governing body, including the chair. I considered the 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including nine comments sent via free-text. I also reviewed the 22 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupils' survey. I spoke to pupils and observed their behaviour throughout the school day. I reviewed the school's website.