

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
Enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



17 November 2015

Mr Daniel Ballard
Headteacher
Mawdesley St Peter's Church of England Primary School
Hurst Green
Mawdesley
Lancashire
L40 2QT

Dear Mr Ballard

Short inspection of Mawdesley St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 3 November 2015, 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 November 2010.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are constantly reviewing your practice to see what is working well and how you can make changes to improve in identified areas. You, your staff and governors work closely together and have a shared vision for pupils to be happy and successful. Together, you have developed a most welcoming ethos in which pupils feel safe, confident and happy. 'My child cannot wait to get into school every day!' is a typical comment expressed by the several parents with whom I spoke during my visit.

At the previous inspection, the inspector commented that behaviour was good and that pupils felt very safe and considered themselves to be highly valued. The school has maintained its strength in these areas. I spoke to many pupils throughout my visit and all of them explained how happy they are at Mawdesley and how they feel safe. Your pupils work well together in all classrooms and play contentedly outside. Older pupils look after their younger peers and act with responsibility when completing their roles as monitors around the school.

The previous inspection report noted the following areas for improvement: developing pupils' writing skills; developing teachers' questioning skills; developing pupils' understanding of diversity in the modern world; ensuring that the quality of

teaching and learning is more systematically monitored; and for school development planning to have a sharper focus.

You have successfully addressed all of these areas for improvement by maintaining the focus on them through your own evaluation of the school's performance. Pupils' writing skills have developed well; work in their writing books shows that they are writing in clear sentences and communicating meaning clearly. Pupils are also given more opportunities to redraft and improve their work; such opportunities are further developing their understanding. Staff training has focused on teachers' use of effective questioning; this has also been a focus for leaders when observing lessons. Teachers' use of questioning, seen during our observations, was effective in most cases and challenged pupils' thinking, although not always as effectively for the most-able pupils.

Pupils now have a very good understanding of the world around them and of the diversity within it. Displays around school celebrate different religions and cultures. Pupils spoke confidently about their understanding of world religions and what life is like for people in different parts of the world, for example for those who are refugees.

Leaders, including governors, have ensured that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently and systematically monitored. Good practice is shared around the school and with other schools and support is given where practice is in need of development. Leaders, including governors, keep themselves well informed of the school's performance

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and reflect the most recent legislation. There are robust systems in place to check the suitability of adults to work with children. All staff have received safeguarding training and governors, along with leaders, have received training in safer recruitment. Every pupil I spoke to said that they are kept safe and feel safe at all times and this was a view shared by the overwhelming majority of parents. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and they are confident that it would be quickly dealt with if it happened.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and governors have a secure and accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning is robust and governors are involved in this process. As well as completing their own monitoring activities, for example by meeting with school staff, governors receive detailed information from you in respect of the quality of teaching and

how much progress pupils are making. This has allowed governors to provide challenge and support which has been instrumental in maintaining the school's overall effectiveness.

- Leaders have correctly identified that standards and practice in the early years have improved. Substantial investment in the outdoor area, within the last year, has resulted in improved outcomes for children because they are now able to access a wider range of activities independently, both in and out of the classroom. Assessment procedures in early years are thorough and assessments that are completed with children when they first enter Reception class are accurate. Findings from assessments are used well to plan engaging activities for children which help them to make strong progress and ensure that they are ready for learning in Year 1.
- Leaders are rightly concentrating on raising standards in mathematics throughout the school, as pupils' progress in some classes last year in mathematics was not as strong as in reading and writing. A new calculations policy is being introduced so that there is a more consistent approach to teaching calculation skills as pupils progress through the school. Leaders understand that their plans to introduce more problem-solving and reasoning through investigations in mathematics are at an early stage and need further development.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons because staff know all pupils well and relationships between staff and pupils are warm and positive. Teachers and support staff use questioning effectively to establish pupils' thinking and then to extend their understanding. Teachers generally plan well for the wide range of abilities within the mixed-age classes, but, although less-able pupils are well supported, in some cases, the challenge for the most-able pupils is not as high as it could be.
- Pupils make strong progress in early years and across Key Stage 1, but leaders are aware that the progress pupils make across Key Stage 2 is not as consistently strong. You are continuing to develop a new system of assessment which will help you to assess more accurately what pupils can do and how to accelerate their progress. We also discussed how the marking of pupils' work, although regular and thorough, does not always provide opportunities for pupils to further improve their understanding.
- Pupils are well motivated to work hard and are rewarded for doing so. This was evident in our visits to classrooms where we found pupils to be engaged and engrossed in their learning. They spoke excitedly about winning an 'X-Factor' certificate in Friday assemblies if they had worked hard or achieved something special in class.
- The local authority has provided effective support for the school. The school adviser visits the school regularly to provide support and challenge, for example when you are monitoring the quality of teaching. Your staff have also benefited from attending training sessions and meetings which have been arranged by the local authority.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- more-able pupils are routinely challenged in all lessons so that they make at least good progress in all subjects
- they continue to develop the new assessment system and use assessment information carefully to plan activities which accelerate progress in all subjects, especially in Key Stage 2
- marking provides more consistent opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding
- pupils have more opportunities to practise their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Lancashire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ian Hardman
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, teachers, six governors including the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. We observed three lessons together and I observed a further lesson on my own. I looked at pupils' books in each class. I spoke with many pupils during lessons, at playtime and at a separate meeting. I looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and action plan, documents relating to safeguarding and information relating to pupils' progress. I also considered the views of 46 parents who completed the online Parent View questionnaire and several parents with whom I spoke at the start of the school day.