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Mr Richard Curry
Headteacher
St. Paul's Catholic Primary School
Bradley Road
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Dear Mr Curry

Short inspection of St. Paul's Catholic School

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 2016, 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 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 have led and managed the school throughout your role as acting headteacher and subsequently as substantive headteacher. Indeed you have built on the strengths identified at the time of the last inspection and tackled identified areas of weakness with determination. You have bolstered the capacity of leaders at all levels, particularly with the appointments of a new inclusion leader and deputy headteacher, who is also the literacy leader. The mathematics leader's role is being strengthened under your guidance and support. He provides professional development for staff, including how to teach problem solving in order to challenge all ability groups. He has been instrumental in raising the profile of mathematics in school and with parents, through workshops and home-school mathematics topic books. Nevertheless, he has yet to model effective practice to colleagues, including the exemplary feedback he provides to pupils on how to improve their work. Furthermore, although you have quite rightly focused on challenging the most-able pupils in mathematics, work in pupils' books confirms that some pupils are not always sufficiently stretched to achieve even more.

You have made sure that all leaders and teaching staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They are now held fully to account for their work. You are crystal clear about what needs to be achieved to make sure that the school

continues to improve. Your focus on improving the quality of teaching has ensured that all pupils are taught well. This has meant taking some difficult decisions to make sure that this happens quickly to eliminate any weak teaching. You have been uncompromising in securing quality teaching. The regular and rigorous monitoring of the school's performance, and diligent use of feedback from pupils, parents and governors, ensure that improvement planning drives the school forwards at a good pace.

You have united all, and created a cohesive team of governors and staff who share your vision that every pupil will achieve their full potential. Staff appreciate the training and support they receive, both in school and through strong networking with other schools. They know what they are aiming for because they observe outstanding teaching and learning. You have developed key areas of mathematics teaching, learning and assessment, including moderation of assessments to secure accuracy, through these local school partnerships.

The curriculum is now well planned and meets the needs, abilities and interests of all pupils. The leader of computing has excellent subject knowledge. He supports colleagues well and inspires them to try out new strategies using the latest technology to bring learning to life for pupils. His innovative approach secures high levels of motivation and engagement of pupils. For example, the blog encourages pupils to share their learning experiences through photographs and videos with other pupils in different year groups, with their parents and to a wider audience, including grandparents, many of whom live in other countries. Pupils were totally captivated as they watched their teacher's still picture of an alien springing into life, through the ingenious use of an application on a tablet. As a result, all ability groups wrote highly creatively and confidently, achieving exceptionally well.

You and all staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils are exceptionally polite and cooperative. They are almost always totally engrossed in their learning. You have focused on developing pupils' leadership skills through projects such as Mini Vinnies. These pupils promote social justice by helping others, within the school and in local, national and international communities. One of their first jobs was to help set up a homeless shelter in partnership with the Catholic Church, St. Paul's. The 'Door of Mercy', an entrance to the school, where both parents and pupils are invited to go through, secures an appreciation of forgiveness and generosity of spirit. Pupils are mature beyond their years. This spiritual and compassionate ethos is threaded through the work of the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's arrangements for making sure that children are kept safe are effective. The single central record of checks determining the suitability of adults to work with children is up to date and complies with statutory requirements. As the designated person for child protection, you have attended appropriate training about the 'Prevent' strategy and have made sure that all staff are fully aware of all potential dangers. The safeguarding policy reflects all the statutory guidance and good

practice. You have made sure that attendance and punctuality have improved. Current attendance rates for all groups of pupils are above average. The inclusion leader carefully monitors the attendance and well-being of those pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Parents and pupils are supported through counselling and family learning programmes. Pupils told me that they feel well cared for in school. Their positive opinions are endorsed by the responses to both the pupils' and parents' questionnaires. Pupils feel safe from all forms of bullying and have confidence in adults and the anti-bullying champions to keep them safe.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have secured significant improvements in pupils' achievements since the previous inspection. There is a rising trend in attainment at the end of the early years. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in 2015 was well above the national average. Likewise, more pupils achieved the expected standard in phonics (the sounds letters make) as a result of systematic and regular phonics teaching. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Key Stage 2 pupils made good progress in reading and outstanding progress in their writing. Their attainment was well above average in both subjects. More pupils achieved the higher levels in writing and reading but not in mathematics. Equally, too few disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected level. As a result, attainment in this subject was average.
- The school's current information on pupils' progress confirms that pupils are working at least within age-related expectations in all subjects. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is closing in mathematics. Nonetheless, the proportion of pupils achieving more than age-related expectations remains lower in this subject than in reading and writing. Pupils who find mathematics easy are not sufficiently challenged. They repeat work which they have already grasped, and as a result their learning is not deepened as fully as it could be and their progress slows.
- Interventions and boosters are well focused on closing gaps and accelerating progress. One-to-one support develops language acquisition for those pupils at the early stages of speaking English. Small-group work develops pupils' phonics skills and guided reading sessions improve pupils' comprehension skills. Those pupils who do not read regularly at home read regularly to adult volunteers and older reading buddies to boost their reading skills. The most-able pupils have additional activities to accelerate their learning in English and mathematics. Those who lack confidence in mathematics, or who have a limited understanding of mathematical vocabulary, have support both in school and in an after-school club.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is rigorous and effective. Evidence from our joint observations of teaching and learning confirms a consistency of approach and high adult expectations for pupils'

learning. Classrooms are well organised and support learning well, including displays to emphasise key concepts and subject-specific vocabulary. Learning in all subjects is developed in relevant and interesting activities. Reception children are provided with a wealth of well-designed activities. They thoroughly enjoy, for example, developing fluency in counting backwards from 20 by creating a number book for a puppet that needs their help and support. Nonetheless, the expertise of your mathematics leader has yet to be used to improve the quality of mathematics teaching across the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- learning for the most-able pupils is challenged and deepened so that their progress is more rapid in mathematics
- the mathematics leader has time to share his excellent practice, including the quality feedback given to pupils.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Westminster, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for the London Borough of Haringey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mary Hinds

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the inclusion leader, subject leaders and a group of pupils who were either school councillors or mini-Vinnies. I spoke to a representative of the local authority and a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body and the Vice-Chair. We visited classrooms together and observed pupils and looked at pupils' work in books. I reviewed a number of documents including records of pupils' progress, parental questionnaires, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's monitoring of teaching and learning. I took account of the views expressed by 23 parents who completed the online questionnaire, 18 members of staff who returned a questionnaire and the results of 21 pupil questionnaires.