

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Anna Fletcher  
Headteacher  
La Salette Catholic Primary School  
Dunedin Road  
Rainham  
Essex  
RM13 8SP

Dear Mrs Fletcher

### **Short inspection of La Salette Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 8 November 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 November 2011.

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

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

Despite staff changes, you and your deputy have sustained teaching quality so that pupils' outcomes remain strong. You have accurately identified areas for improvement, including teaching quality and the use of assessment, and have tackled them effectively. This has been especially challenging with the change of staff and the need to provide support for teachers new to the profession. However, the impact of this work is clear and the school is well on its way to achieving consistently effective teaching across all classes. You recognise that there is still some more work to do but, with the support of senior leaders, there is the drive and capacity to improve teaching and learning further.

You have a clear vision for La Salette that is underpinned by the commitment of all staff to the school's Catholic values. This commitment creates a strong culture in which everyone is valued and respected. As a result, pupils' attitudes to school, and to their work, are consistently positive. They are well behaved and well mannered and very welcoming to visitors. For example, they were very happy to speak with me about their work and chatted confidently when I met some of them in the playground. Pupils were very proud of their school, telling me that I was wearing the wrong colour tie and shoes because they did not match the school's uniform.

You and your deputy have high expectations of pupils and staff alike. Your determination to provide pupils with a good start in life has helped to tackle the challenges of supporting new and inexperienced staff. Teachers are using assessment more consistently to ensure that they set work at the right level and encourage pupils to improve their next piece of work. There is some variation in the way assessment is used because one or two staff lack experience. However, you have a clear understanding of the extent of any inconsistencies and your work to raise teaching standards is having a positive effect.

Senior leaders and governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. This is because the revised procedures for checking pupils' progress are effective. You recognise that these can be improved further but your work to develop a system that can be easily understood, and provides an accurate picture of each pupil's achievements, has paid dividends. As a result, those pupils who need extra support are identified quickly and interventions are well targeted. This is helping to diminish the differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school and nationally.

You have established secure systems for checking the quality of teaching and holding teachers to account for their work. You collect a broad range of evidence, including observing learning in lessons, assessment information and looking at pupils' work in books. As a result, evaluations are accurate and enable you to target support where it is needed most, including for those teachers in the early stages of their careers. This work is linked closely to the way you manage teachers' performance and make decisions about their progress through the pay scales.

You have ensured that the curriculum provides effectively for pupils' needs and that it broadens their horizons and aspirations. For example, giving pupils opportunities to learn a musical instrument enables them to develop their creative skills. Visits to the ballet and concerts at the Royal Opera House and the Royal Festival Hall give pupils the opportunity to broaden their experiences and develop an awareness of the wider world. School clubs, such as sport, the choir and the music ensemble, give pupils opportunities to develop their talents and interests.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The school places a high priority on pupils' safety and welfare. There are clear procedures for checking the suitability of those who work with pupils including teachers, teaching assistants, volunteers and governors. Regular training and clear policies ensure that staff have a secure understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures. For example, they have received training on the 'Prevent' duty and female genital mutilation. As a result, staff are confident in recognising the signs that pupils may be at risk and know what to do if they have any concerns.

Pupils feel safe and well looked after in school. They know who to turn to if they are worried about anything. Pupils feel well supported at school and trust their teachers and other adults. They know how to keep themselves safe and talk confidently about the dangers of using the internet. This is because the school provides clear

and unambiguous advice to pupils, and teachers reinforce this regularly in lessons.

There are rigorous procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and staff take appropriate action if pupils miss school. The school works effectively with parents if absence becomes a concern. As a result, persistent absence is rare and pupils' attendance is well above the national average.

## **Inspection findings**

- Leaders and governors have high expectations and a clear focus on continuing to improve teaching quality and raising pupils' achievements further. The systems for checking pupils' progress and evaluating teaching quality are thorough. As a result, leaders have a secure understanding of individual pupils' achievements across the school and where teaching needs improving. This enables leaders to target support effectively.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to provide a variety of interventions and activities. Leaders have evaluated the impact of last year's intervention programme and have used this to adapt and develop the way pupils are supported. The range of initiatives this year is having a positive impact. Disadvantaged pupils, including those who are the most able, are catching up and their achievements are close to others in the school and nationally.
- Progress in key stage 2 continues to be strong, especially in writing. This is because there is a lively focus on writing in lessons, which develops pupils' skills effectively. For example, Year 6 pupils demonstrated a real understanding of the poetry of the first world war and the way the poems use imagery to convey the horrors of war.
- Progress in reading is evident and although it is less strong than in writing, pupils' achievements are good. Leaders have identified that pupils, especially boys, were not doing as well in reading as they are in writing. Consequently, there is now a greater focus on using high-quality books to develop pupils' language skills and vocabulary. While it is too early to evaluate the impact of this initiative fully, pupils enjoy reading regularly in school and at home.
- In mathematics, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is broadly average. Leaders recognise that providing work at a greater depth, especially for the most able pupils, is a priority. Consequently, there is an increased focus on developing mathematical 'mastery' across the school.
- Achievement by the end of key stage 1 has not been as solid as at key stage 2. This is because many children begin school in Reception with limited skills. Although they make clear progress in Reception, they still begin Year 1 with skills that are below expectations. However, leaders and teachers have worked diligently to review the teaching of writing with support from the local authority. This is starting to have a positive impact on pupils' literacy skills in Reception and key stage 1.

- Pupils enjoy their lessons a great deal. As one pupil said, 'it is cool watching younger pupils learn'. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to make learning interesting, and this motivates pupils effectively. Behaviour is consistently good and teachers are especially skilled at managing lessons and learning. As a result, disruption to learning is rare and very little time is wasted when moving from one activity to another.
- In many classrooms, teachers use assessment well to provide work that is challenging and to adapt lessons so that they keep pupils interested and motivated. Although this is not consistent across all classes, leaders provide thorough support to help teachers improve their skills. This work is proving successful and teaching quality has improved considerably since last year.
- The school's positive culture promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development most effectively. Pupils' conduct around the school is faultless. They are polite, courteous and respectful of others. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, and are especially good at working together to share ideas and equipment.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of teaching and learning continues to improve so the impact on pupils' learning is consistently good or better over time
- assessment is used consistently to set work that is suitably challenging and stimulating, especially for the most able pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Oppenheim  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

In preparation for the inspection, the following key lines of enquiry were identified:

- Current achievement, including in key stage 1 and in reading and writing.
- The progress of prior middle attainers, disadvantaged pupils overall and, in writing, the most and least able, and the most able disadvantaged pupils overall.
- The quality of teaching, especially assessment for learning. The consistent use of assessment.

- The impact of leadership and management: specifically, the extent to which monitoring and evaluation focuses on the quality of learning across subjects.
- The role and impact of leaders and governors on safeguarding.

The following activities were carried out during the inspection:

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and governors.
- A group of pupils were spoken to and others were heard reading.
- Parents were spoken to informally before and after school.
- A range of documents were reviewed, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, information about pupils' progress and attendance, and records of the work of the governing body. The school's single central record and safeguarding procedures were also checked.
- The school's website was reviewed and this confirmed that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information.
- The inspector took account of 48 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- All classes were visited to see a range of subjects being taught, including English, mathematics, science and computing.