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Miss Roxanne Taylor
Headteacher
St Paulinus Catholic Primary School
Temple Road
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West Yorkshire
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Dear Miss Taylor

Short inspection of St Paulinus Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 December 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 May 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You took on the role of headteacher in September 2016 following the retirement of the previous headteacher. You have quickly established senior and middle leadership teams, mostly from existing staff members. They are all acutely aware of their responsibilities and you have empowered them to be able to complete these roles effectively. Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have tracked pupils' progress and taken action when weaknesses have been identified. Your systems to evaluate the quality of teaching have recently become more rigorous and all leaders are now involved in this monitoring. Consequently, weaker teachers have quickly improved because of the appropriate support to do so. You and your team have ensured that pupils continue to be well cared for and that expectations of behaviour remain high.

At the last inspection, the progress and attainment of boys were identified as weaker, as well as meeting the needs of the most able pupils and the need for teachers to share good practice to improve their teaching skills. Senior leaders have comprehensively addressed all of these areas for improvement. You know your school well and accurately identify where improvements are needed. However, not all actions taken are evaluated rigorously enough so that you and all senior leaders know the impact. You correctly identify that not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have taken on the role of designated safeguarding lead yourself and have carried it out effectively. You commissioned a review of safeguarding in the school to ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are effective. As a consequence of this review, improvements have been made in how single assessment part 1 referrals are undertaken. Records of incidents are meticulous and you identify any trends quickly. You take seriously any allegations of bullying. Action taken is recorded carefully and pupils involved are monitored. All staff are trained appropriately and the safeguarding policy is available for all adults. It is up to date and gives clear guidance on the actions adults should take if they have any concerns. Pupils say that they feel safe and are educated well on how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations.

Inspection findings

- Pupils' rates of attendance are steadily improving, although these improvements have yet to be sustained. A number of different strategies have been implemented since September 2016 to encourage parents to ensure that their child attends more regularly. Every Thursday, parents are invited to attend a celebration assembly and those pupils whose attendance has improved receive incentives such as postcards and having afternoon tea with the headteacher. Consequently, rates of attendance are now higher than they were at the same time last year. Leaders and managers need to ensure that those responsible for pupils' attendance have higher expectations of what can be achieved and that each initiative is carefully monitored to see whether it is effective.
- You and your leadership team have carefully tracked children's achievements in the early years provision and have recognised the need to improve reading skills. You have implemented a range of initiatives. For example, reading corners are now available in every early years classroom and topics and activities are planned to ensure the promotion of a rich language environment. The impact of these and other initiatives needs to be more rigorously monitored. Teachers track children's progress in phonics well and can provide clear evidence of how quickly children, particularly those children who speak English as an additional language, progress in this area. The outside environment, an area for improvement at the previous inspection, has been enhanced with additions such as a new sandpit, mud kitchen and an outside writing area. Children mix extremely well and enjoy this spacious environment where they can move to different rooms to focus on different areas of learning. Occasionally, adult interactions with these young children demonstrate that they do not have high enough expectations of what children can achieve.
- The impact of actions taken by the new key stage 1 leader on pupils' phonic knowledge is evident. Pupils now benefit from the introduction of a new daily spelling scheme to improve their writing skills. Personal targets, along with new writing schemes, have been introduced, and topics reviewed, to interest pupils and stimulate them to write. The influence some of these initiatives is having on pupils is not always tracked thoroughly. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child's school life by becoming involved in taking part in events such

as 'book and biscuits' and 'buns and sums'. There has been some disruption to pupils' learning in this key stage due to staff absence. You and your leaders have taken action to support those pupils whose learning was affected negatively. Teachers in key stage 1 do not always get pupils to work at a level they are capable of and at times this means that progress is not as good as it could be.

- The school's marking and feedback policy helps pupils in key stage 2 know exactly what they need to learn and how they can improve their work. The most able pupils in this key stage are generally well challenged, as teachers quickly identify when they need to move on so that they learn at a greater depth. The most able pupils also read extremely fluently and the school's investment in two new libraries enables these pupils to select from a wide range of reading materials. Least-able pupils and those in receipt of the pupil premium funding also have access to extra reading books through a scheme that the school has recently joined. These extra books help encourage pupils to read more widely and often.
- You and your leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning extensively. Teachers plan activities that engage pupils and make them want to learn. They are also skilled in questioning pupils, and their behaviour management is highly successful. You and your team use a range of evidence to hold teachers to account regularly for the progress the pupils are making. You have introduced a set of minimum expectations that all teachers need to aspire to so that the learning environment meets the needs of pupils. Some pupils spend too long working on things that are too easy for them, as some teachers in the school do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers plan lessons and mark pupils' work together so that stronger teaching staff may support others. You have made sure that being a part of a group of schools is beneficial to improving the quality of teaching, as teachers are able to learn from others and share good practice.
- All leaders and managers, including governors, are continually striving to improve the quality of care and education pupils receive, and they have introduced a number of strategies across all key stages to do this. Not all strategies are evaluated and monitored closely enough by all leaders and managers, including governors, to ensure that these are helping pupils achieve as well as they could.
- Governors have a range of skills that they use to support school development. They acquire appropriate information from the headteacher and her senior leaders so that they know exactly what is happening in the school. They are quick to challenge school leaders when the quality of teaching is not good enough to promote good learning. Governors are well trained, and following a recent self-review, they have restructured committees so that they can better support school improvement.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, evaluate the impact of their actions more thoroughly
- all teachers and other staff raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Roman Catholic diocese of Leeds, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kirklees. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Sharpe
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, the following areas were focused on:

- Is safeguarding effective?
- How well are school leaders improving attendance?
- Is the early years provision still good?
- Are pupils in key stage 1 achieving as well as they could do?
- What have leaders and managers done to improve pupils' achievement in reading in key stage 2?
- Are leaders and managers tackling weaknesses quickly and appropriately?

During the inspection, I met with you and your senior leadership team. You, the deputy headteacher and I observed teaching and learning in a number of classrooms. I also met with members of your governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I spoke to pupils about their work and their views of the school both in lessons and in more formal meetings. I also listened to pupils of different abilities read. I considered the views of parents, as gathered from your own surveys and from Parent View. The views of staff were gathered from surveys and from discussions. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised whilst in lessons and from a sample selected. A range of documents was scrutinised, including those relating to safeguarding, meetings of the governing body, external evaluations of the school, performance management and pupils' achievement.