

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



15 March 2017

Mr John Hutchinson
Headteacher
St Theresa's Catholic Primary School
Barwick Road
Crossgates
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS15 8RQ

Dear Mr Hutchinson

Short inspection of St Theresa's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 March 2017, 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 January 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained and further improved the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You and your leadership team have successfully created a culture of care combined with high expectations of both pupils and staff. Pupils thrive in the nurturing climate, which enables them to achieve highly.

You have improved the capacity of the school by developing and devolving responsibility to other leaders. Other members of staff regularly 'step up to the plate' and take responsibility for leading whole-school priorities. This has seen significant improvements in the progress pupils are making in their reading and mathematics. These subjects are now real strengths of the school.

You and your senior leaders are highly visible in and around school, regularly visiting classrooms to check on pupils' progress, and you know the school inside out. You can clearly show what is working well and are working on sensible priorities for further improvement. Staff feel well led and are proud of their school and what has been achieved since the last inspection.

You have not allowed the successes you have had to cloud your judgements. You have accurately honed in on areas that need improving, including the progress that some groups of pupils, including the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, should be making in writing and in some key

stage 1 classes. The progress pupils make in developing their writing is not as strong as it is in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.

At your last inspection attainment, especially in mathematics, was an area for improvement. In your desire and drive to further improve the school, you have developed an outward-looking approach to school improvement. You and other staff regularly visit other schools to see effective practice and how it can be used to help pupils in your school. This has proven highly effective. Significant impact of this work can be seen in the way that English and mathematics are taught and in the improvements made to the learning environment in the early years.

Governors are sharp, perceptive and not afraid to challenge you and your team. Governors have a sound, secure strategic understanding of their role. They clearly demonstrate that they know what is working well and where they want to see further improvement. Governors ask well-targeted questions, especially in relation to the progress of particular year groups, and remain focused on making sure that the actions leaders take benefit pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

Alongside a culture of care, there is a culture of vigilance when it comes to keeping pupils safe. You and other staff in school work tirelessly to make sure that pupils are safe and secure in school. Many staff commented that if they had any doubts or concerns about a child's safety then they 'must pass it on' and share their concerns. As a result, pupils are happy in school, attend regularly and bullying is rare. Your 'golden rules' and clear behaviour system means that pupils are polite, cooperative and considerate.

Staff, including administrative staff, have benefited from the regular and helpful safeguarding updates. They understand that safeguarding concerns can occur anywhere and this prevents staff from being complacent. Early help is highly effective in supporting the most vulnerable pupils. Case studies show the very positive work in helping vulnerable pupils improve their attendance and the work with parents in helping them to engage more successfully with school.

Child protection case files are effective and regularly updated. There are clear and regularly updated records showing the contact with both pupils and parents. Child protection plans are effective and school leaders ensure that there are suitably challenging academic targets included. The school works very well with a wide range of agencies including health professionals, social workers and the police. The single central record is thorough and meets statutory requirements.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have made significant and sustained improvements in the progress pupils are making in reading and mathematics. These areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. Outcomes by the end of key stage 2 show that the progress pupils made in both reading and

mathematics was significantly better than national averages.

- Children's outcomes in the early years continue to improve. Outcomes have been improving year on year and are now in line with national averages. Boys' attainment continues to improve in the early years and is now close to the national average. Over time, boys who have not reached a good level of development in literacy have made good progress in key stage 1 and achieved well in their Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Leaders have significantly improved the quality of their monitoring. The school self-evaluation pulls no punches and clearly shows the areas that school leaders rightly feel need improving. Comprehensive improvement plans are in place and are clearly charting the positive progress leaders are making in tackling these priorities.
- Overall absence rates remain low. Pupils enjoy coming to school and value the rewards and certificates on offer, including the chance of winning 'Punctual Pete', the teddy bear for good attendance. Staff are quick to tackle pupil absence and go the extra mile to make sure pupils attend school regularly. Leaders recognise the need to drill down further into attendance data to look for potential trends and reasons for the lower attendance of some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Work in pupils' books shows that they have more opportunities to practise and develop their writing in their English lessons than they do in their topic or science lessons. Leaders need to do more to help pupils develop their historical, geographical and scientific writing.
- Pupils benefit from teaching over time that is highly engaging and motivating. The quality of presentation is usually very good and demonstrates that teachers follow the agreed non-negotiable rules for how pupils should present their work. Pupils show high levels of enthusiasm and resilience when tackling new learning.
- Parental comments are rightly very positive about the work of the school. A number of parents spoke of how staff go 'above and beyond' to help them and their children and the 'passion and commitment' staff show in wanting the very best for pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils, including the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make better progress in writing
- pupils have more opportunities to develop their extended writing across the wider curriculum, including in history, geography and science
- attendance data is more carefully analysed to look for potential reasons why the attendance of some groups is not as good as that of other pupils and devise strategies to successfully tackle this.

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

Yours sincerely

Phil Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteachers and your special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)/inclusion manager. I also met with a group of subject leaders, governors and the local authority school improvement advisers. Together with you, your deputy headteachers and the SENCo, we visited classrooms to observe teaching and to look at pupils' work. I also listened to some pupils read. Consideration was given to 49 free text responses from Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and to nine staff survey responses and eight pupil survey responses. I evaluated recent information in relation to pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation document, the school's single integrated development plan and a range of documentation about how you keep pupils safe. I also sampled the case files of vulnerable children.