

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Jackie Tranchina
St Paul's Cray Church of England Primary School
Buttermere Road
Orpington
Kent
BR5 3WD

Dear Ms Tranchina

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Paul's Cray Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 20 April 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in June 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

At its previous section 5 inspection in November 2013, the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- continue the work to ensure that the curriculum is broad enough to meet the needs of the pupils, giving more opportunities for them to apply their basic skills successfully.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I held discussions with pupils, the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority by telephone. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I visited all classes, together with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and scrutinised a number of books. Documents provided by the school, including leadership evaluations of teaching and learning, the school's single central record and examples of the minutes of governors' meetings, were considered.

Context

The school is currently expanding in numbers from one to two forms of entry.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection, you and school leaders, including governors, have worked quickly to address the areas for improvement. Working with a national lead in education, you have devised an effective monitoring system to evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. This has resulted in a more robust overview of the quality of teaching and a more consistent approach to teachers' practice in the classrooms. You have led the school successfully through this drive for improvement. Consequently, staff morale is high and they are committed to the school's vision of high expectations for all pupils.

The restructuring of the school leadership team has ensured that the right staff are in place with the skills to continue to accelerate school improvement. Leaders follow up any areas where staff require further development with high-quality advice and training. This has been successful in ensuring that teachers receive the right support. As a result, leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching better meets the needs of pupils. For example, teachers are more confident in using information provided by their assessments of pupil progress. They plan effectively for the next steps in pupils' learning. Sharing good practice and working in partnership with other local schools are also proving effective in helping teachers increase their confidence in accurately checking pupils' achievement. A new tracking system successfully identifies when groups of pupils are not achieving as well as they should. This results in targeted support given to pupils so that they catch up with their peers quickly.

Your improvement plans are clear and have distinct markers to measure the impact of action taken. Already, improvements to teaching are having a positive effect on current outcomes for pupils in writing. Identified teachers are encouraged to try the new initiatives in their classroom before introducing them to the rest of the staff. For example, in one year group, a new mathematics approach has been successfully

implemented and books show that these pupils, including the most able, are making stronger progress over time. In another year group, a new spelling scheme is being trialled to assess its effect on improving pupils' writing. Current work in pupils' books shows that pupils are making strong progress in developing writing skills over time across a number of curriculum subjects. Leaders agree that further work is required to embed this and ensure that pupils' books fully demonstrate the different subjects in the curriculum.

Governors are a highly-skilled and committed group. They have worked alongside you to set the vision for high expectations and improving standards for all pupils. They visit the school regularly to validate key information regarding school performance. This enables them to see the school's improvement actions for themselves.

Safeguarding is effective. You have made sure that all records are fit for purpose. Up-to-date training has covered all recent government requirements. Staff know what to do if they believe pupils may be at risk of harm.

Pupils are supportive of the changes made in the curriculum. They can see how their lessons are more exciting. They like the way that teachers make them feel confident about their achievements. They speak confidently about how the school's work on e-safety has increased their awareness of how to stay safe when using technology. Older pupils appreciate the work the school does in preparing them for the move to secondary school.

Parents are supportive of the school's work in keeping their children safe. They are positive about the direction of the school and value how they are kept informed about their children's progress.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Sara Morgan
Her Majesty's Inspector