

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



8 June 2017

Ann Higgs  
Headteacher  
St George's Cathedral Catholic Primary School  
33 Westminster Bridge Road  
Southwark  
London  
SE1 7JB

Dear Mrs Higgs

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St George's Cathedral Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 May 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 May 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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:

- improve the consistency of good teaching across the school
- ensure that there is consistent challenge for pupils in lessons, particularly the most able pupils.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school's action

plan. I visited most classes with you and reviewed work in pupils' books. I spoke to pupils during lessons and met with a group of pupils. I considered a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, external reviews of the school, leaders' evaluation on the quality of teaching and learning, current assessment information, behaviour logs and the single central record of pre-employment checks on staff.

## **Context**

Since the previous inspection, the senior leadership team has been restructured. There have been changes to the teaching staff. The chair of governors has recently resigned and the vice-chair has taken on the role temporarily. The headteacher is retiring this year and the school is entering a partnership with a secondary school and two primary schools within the diocese. The transition to joining a soft federation with these schools has already begun.

## **Main findings**

The headteacher, supported by senior leaders and governors, has acted resolutely to improve standards. Senior leaders' roles and responsibilities have been reviewed to focus precisely on the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Sensibly, school leaders have been assigned to specific areas and their work is monitored carefully by the headteacher and governors. Senior leaders now have a clear understanding of the school's performance and have raised expectations of both staff and pupils.

Senior leaders have taken swift and effective actions to improve the systems used to monitor teaching and learning. They carry out a rigorous programme of checks, including lesson observations, book scrutiny, pupil progress meetings, lesson planning evaluations and 'pupil voice' surveys. This gives leaders a detailed overview of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Crucially, leaders use this information to identify strengths and training needs for teachers. Each teacher has a personalised development plan which is updated regularly and areas for development are followed up at the next monitoring cycle. As a result, the standard of teaching has improved. However, some variability is still evident in the quality of teaching, which is reflected in the uneven rates of progress in key stage 2.

Leaders are holding teachers to account more closely for the impact they have on improving pupils' outcomes. There is more effective use of assessment information to drive progress. Leaders meet teachers regularly to review assessment information and identify pupils at risk of underachievement. Rigorous external moderation has helped to ensure that teacher assessments are accurate. Appropriate intervention strategies are put in place to ensure that these are having a positive impact. Whole-school training is focused on key areas for development in teaching, such as effective questioning. Leaders have rightly focused on an agreed

set of techniques which they observe and give feedback on to staff after lesson observations.

Leaders have ensured that pupils benefit from more consistent and thoughtfully planned teaching. Staff have received training to help them plan interesting and challenging activities. This is evident in pupils' work in mathematics where there is an increased focus on reasoning and problem solving. Leaders acknowledge that there is still work to be done in ensuring that pupils, particularly the most able, are challenged sufficiently in reading and writing.

Staff training on guided reading and the support from a consultant for individual teachers has improved the delivery of reading lessons. Activities are more purposeful than before and pupils' progress is improving, particularly in Year 6 and key stage 1. Reading records show that pupils are reading more at home.

Leaders have reviewed the behaviour policy and shared it with staff to ensure that there is a more consistent approach to behaviour management. Teachers refer any incidents of particularly poor behaviour to a senior leader who has direct overview of behaviour across the school. Incidents are tracked closely to identify and tackle any patterns of poor behaviour. Leaders have successfully worked with a group of pupils who presented particularly challenging behaviour. The vast majority of pupils show good attitudes to learning. However, in some lessons I observed off-task behaviour when pupils were not engaged in the lesson. Pupils say behaviour has improved both in the classroom and in the playground. They like the rewards they receive, such as the 'golden table', and say this motivates them to behave well. The enhanced range of activities at playtimes, including quiet areas for pupils to read, has contributed to this and pupils play happily together. Leaders have worked with staff to ensure that they deal with behaviour effectively at lunchtime. However, the 'no-ball zone' is not always enforced.

### **External support**

The local authority adviser has worked with senior leaders for several years and knows the school well. Advisers have provided robust evaluation of the school's work and given valuable advice, support and monitoring to the school, which is well received. The school works closely and effectively with other services recommended by the local authority. The school is about to undergo another period of change as it moves into a partnership with Notre Dame School and the federation of St James the Great and St John's Catholic Primary Schools. The local authority supports this move and it would be useful if they continued to offer support.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education

for the Archdiocese of Southwark, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Southwark. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**