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Mrs Moira Dales
Headteacher
Our Lady & St Edward Primary & Nursery Catholic Voluntary Academy
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Dear Mrs Dales

Short inspection of Our Lady & St Edward Primary & Nursery Catholic Voluntary Academy

Following my visit to the 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. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 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 have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. You have used this to create a sharply focused improvement plan, designed to maximise pupils' progress. Leaders, governors and staff share your high aspirations for all pupils. You all work together effectively to improve the quality of education for pupils at the school.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are friendly and caring pupils. One pupil said, 'In this school, we look after each other.' Parents appreciate the inclusive, warm and welcoming atmosphere that you have created.

Leaders have successfully tackled the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. The deputy headteacher, who is also the leader for English, has ensured that staff use a range of texts in the teaching of subjects other than English, to help pupils broaden their vocabulary. Staff have received training to enhance the teaching of reading and comprehension skills. In 2016, the school's pupils made significantly more progress than the national average by the time they reached the end of key stage 2. The deputy headteacher has also developed the school's library and purchased more books that represent the range of languages spoken in the school.

The mathematics leader, who is also the assistant headteacher, has ensured that teachers plan mathematics lessons that enable pupils to have more experience of solving problems and undertaking investigations. Pupils build on their skills, using a range of resources and strategies. Teachers' planning reflects the need for pupils to develop these opportunities. Pupils who spoke to me during the inspection commented that they enjoy mathematics.

You and the assistant headteacher have reviewed the planning in mathematics to ensure that it is meeting more closely the needs of the pupils. The recent changes have not yet had enough time to have a positive impact, so that a greater proportion of pupils achieve greater depth in mathematics by the end of key stage 1. You and the mathematics leader check on pupils' learning to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematics are improving across the curriculum.

The leader for the early years has ensured that the environment is an exciting place to be, where children are able to develop their reading, writing and problem-solving skills. A seamless stream of interesting activities flows from the classroom to the outdoor spaces. Children use the dedicated outside reading area and a range of activities to develop their problem-solving skills, when buying bunches of flowers at the 'garden centre', for example. In 2016, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was above the national average. This is an improvement over the previous year.

Staff in the early years accurately assess children's learning. They regularly check their assessments with other schools in the South Nottingham Catholic Academy Trust to ensure that they are accurate. Teachers and teaching assistants support children well to develop their reading and writing skills by using probing questions, and the children make good progress. For example, teachers encouraged children to use their phonic knowledge to write out simple sentences, which linked to the religious education topic based on Sikhism.

Safeguarding is effective.

You are supported as the designated safeguarding leader by two other senior leaders. You are all appropriately trained and keep your knowledge current through regular local authority network meetings and online updates. Leaders and the governing body complete termly audits to check that safeguarding arrangements continue to be robust. All statutory checks on staff are carried out and recorded carefully. You rightly make the safety of pupils your highest priority. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of a high quality.

All staff know what to do if they have a concern. You showed me some examples where you had dealt with concerns promptly and followed up referrals with external agencies. Staff have had training so they can recognise how to protect pupils from the threat of radicalisation and extremism. You have also ensured that appropriate staff are trained in paediatric first aid.

Pupils said that they feel safe at the school. You have provided opportunities for them to learn about how to stay safe online. Pupils said that bullying is very rare and were adamant that, if it did happen, it would be dealt with quickly and effectively by teachers.

Inspection findings

- You have robust plans in place to ensure that there is a continued focus on teaching and learning, to reflect the school's commitment to sustained improvement. Leadership is astute and reflective, which enables you to identify the school's priorities accurately.
- The relationship between teachers and pupils is positive, and pupils willingly follow teachers' instructions in lessons. Classrooms are attractive; displays celebrate pupils' work and provide them with helpful prompts and examples of how to make their work better. This helps pupils to value and appreciate the work and views of others.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's free-text service expressed their satisfaction with the warm and friendly staff. Consequently, pupils settle to their learning quickly and grow in confidence.
- Information on the school's performance from 2016 shows that no pupils achieved the higher standards at the end of key stage 1 in mathematics. Remedying this is rightly a high priority in your plans. This academic year, the school has introduced a new approach to the teaching of mathematics, to ensure that there is sufficient challenge to allow pupils, particularly the most able, to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- You check the quality of teaching and learning rigorously and provide pertinent feedback to staff, to ensure that there is continued improvement. The school also receives regular checks on learning, from trustees, as well as frequent moderation with other schools across the trust. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning across the school is consistently good, ensuring that pupils make good progress.
- You have ensured that the assessment and tracking system is effective and provides you with a clear analysis of the attainment and progress of individual pupils and of different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. You regularly review this data to ensure that any pupil who is falling behind can receive timely support to catch up.
- Pupils learn about responsibility through a range of groups, such as the chaplaincy team, the school council and the playground buddies. Pupils enjoy these roles and value helping others. They apply for the roles and are interviewed for them. The skills they develop are supporting pupils' personal and social education. Consequently, pupils are articulate, confident and mature in their attitudes to learning.
- Leaders have introduced 'Aspirations Week', which has enabled pupils to meet people from a range of occupations and learn what they do. Pupils have had the

opportunity to meet a local member of parliament, a health visitor, a radiologist and retired Armed Forces personnel. Consequently, pupils have an understanding of a range of employment opportunities available to them, as they prepare for the next stage of their education. During the inspection, pupils expressed their enjoyment of 'Aspirations Week'.

- Pupils learn about life beyond Britain through the range of visitors to the school. For example, a recent visitor explained how her trip to Peru helped her to understand the difficulties that other worldwide communities face. Pupils have opportunities to learn about worldwide issues and develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects to life well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide enriched learning opportunities in mathematics and in other subjects to ensure that a greater proportion of pupils achieve greater depth in mathematics at the end of key stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Nuttall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you as headteacher and the person responsible for safeguarding. I met with the deputy headteacher, who is also the leader for English and the leader responsible for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. I met with the assistant headteacher who is also the leader responsible for early years and the leader for mathematics. I held meetings with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and one other governor.

We visited a series of lessons together. I examined samples of pupils' work and talked with pupils about their work. I met with a group of pupils and spoke informally with others during breaktimes and lessons.

I observed pupils' behaviour around the school at the start of the day, at breaktimes and during lessons. I met with parents at the beginning of the school day and I took account of 13 responses to Ofsted's free-text service and 15

responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff or pupils. I examined a range of documents, including safeguarding records and policies, the single central record, behaviour policies, the latest achievement information for the school, the school's self-evaluation summary and improvement plan, and information relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.