

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



7 December 2017

Mr Martin Hings
The Holy Family Catholic School
Spring Gardens Lane
Keighley
West Yorkshire
BD20 6LH

Dear Mr Hings

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Holy Family Catholic School

Following my visit to your school on 23 November 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 January 2017. 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 for the school to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- continue to reduce the variation in the quality of teaching, particularly in science
- reduce fixed-term exclusions and continue to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils
- strengthen governance further by ensuring that the governing body plays a greater role in evaluating the impact of actions identified in the school improvement plan.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with yourself and members of the senior and middle leadership teams. I held a telephone conversation with the deputy director of education at the local authority. I met with the diocesan director of education. I examined a range of documents, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, assessment information, governing body minutes, and exclusion and attendance records. I met with two members of the governing body and a national leader of governance, who is supporting the school. I visited lessons with a deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher. I scrutinised a sample of pupils' work with the deputy headteacher who has responsibility for teaching and learning. I talked to a group of Year 9 and Year 10 pupils.

Context

Since the previous inspection there have been 17 staff changes including the appointment of a new head of English, head of science, head of religious education and head of history. You have built additional capacity within your senior leadership team with the appointment of five associate senior leaders. These include the appointment of a pupil premium champion, a senior leader with responsibility for disadvantaged pupils. You have also appointed a pupil premium coordinator. You have established a joint review group to monitor the progress and actions taken since the previous inspection. This group includes a national leader of governance. You have also commissioned a number of external reviews including a review of governance, a review of how the school uses the money received to support disadvantaged pupils and a review of science and mathematics.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection you, your senior leadership team and governors have taken action with a sense of pace and urgency. This has ensured that there has been an unrelenting focus on the key areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. There has been no complacency and you are all outward looking. For example, you commissioned a number of external reviews immediately after the previous inspection. This has enabled leaders to produce a robust improvement plan, firmly focused on the actions needed to improve teaching and ensure that all pupils make good or better progress.

Governors have wholeheartedly taken on board the recommendations from the review of governance in order to improve their practice. Governors have welcomed the support from a national leader of governance. They have embarked on training in order to challenge and question leaders. Since these actions, governors receive more detailed reports, including clearer information on pupils' progress, from school leaders. Consequently, governors are clearer about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. One governor told me: 'We are much better at challenging senior leaders and not just accepting what senior leaders tell us.' Governors acknowledge

that they could evaluate to a greater extent the impact of actions taken by leaders to improve the school further.

Subject leaders are now more accountable for the quality of provision. They more actively check the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. They are clearer about the progress pupils make, including the variability for different groups of pupils. This enables subject leaders to target more precisely support for those pupils who are at risk of underachieving. As a result, progress information for current pupils shows that pupils in Years 10 and 11 are making better progress. Pastoral leaders now work more closely with subject leaders to review pupils' progress information and discuss next steps to support pupils. This strategy is in its infancy and, therefore, it is too early to assess the impact.

Since the previous inspection, systems to assure the quality of provision have become more established across the school. Through activities such as the 'focus fortnight', where senior and subject leaders work together to review strengths and weakness in each subject area, leaders identify more precise actions to enhance and improve the quality of teaching and improve pupils' outcomes. However, leaders realise that there is still work to do to ensure that all subject leaders are consistent in their expectations, so that pupils make at least good progress in all subjects.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making better progress. This is because every pupil now has a personalised 'passport'. This includes pupils' views on what will help them in their learning. This has given greater attention to providing specific support for these pupils.

The quality of teaching is showing signs of improvement. Teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can do and achieve. Teachers check more regularly that pupils understand what they are learning. As a result, teachers are able to address pupils' misconceptions more quickly. However, leaders have identified that there is further work to do to ensure that teachers' questioning routinely challenges pupils' thinking. Leaders also acknowledge that there remains variation in the quality of teaching and learning.

Since the previous inspection, you have placed high importance on pupils having more opportunities to improve their work. Pupils told me that this is helping them to see where they have gone wrong so that they do not make the same mistakes again. However, this practice is not consistently applied across subjects and is, for example, stronger in English and mathematics compared to science.

Immediately after the previous inspection you commissioned a pupil premium review. Leaders and governors acted with pace to address the key recommendations from the review. Your subsequent action plan gives sufficient attention to the implementation of specific actions to improve the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. Based on 2017 provisional GCSE outcomes, disadvantaged

pupils did not make good progress across their subjects. However, there is an improving picture of pupils' achievement for current disadvantaged pupils in Years 10 and 11. Improving the progress of these pupils remains a high priority for leaders. As a result, you have appointed three higher level teaching assistants to provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils in English, mathematics and science. You have also appointed a pupil premium coordinator to support disadvantaged pupils to improve their attendance. You acknowledged that reducing the number of exclusions received by disadvantaged pupils is a key improvement priority.

Leaders have established more robust systems to track pupils' progress in Years 10 and 11. This enables subject and senior leaders to have meaningful discussions about the progress that pupils make. As a result, leaders have identified that accelerating the progress of most-able pupils is an area for improvement. Due to the recent introduction of a new key stage 3 assessment policy, systems to track the progress made by pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 are less well evolved. Leaders recognise this is an area for development to ensure that any gaps in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are recognised and addressed quickly.

External support

The diocese has provided effective support for the governing body through the creation of a joint review group, with support from a national leader of governance. This group is helping to challenge governors and leaders in evaluating improvements. You have commissioned support from two specialist leaders of education for science and mathematics. This has led to the development of action plans which give more attention to improving teaching and learning and pupils' progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Michele Costello
Her Majesty's Inspector