

5 February 2018

Mrs Elizabeth McDonagh-Smith  
Headteacher  
Holy Rosary and St Anne's Catholic Primary School  
Leopold Street  
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Dear Mrs McDonagh-Smith

### **Short inspection of Holy Rosary and St Anne's Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 23 January 2018, 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 2013.

#### **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 maintained and enhanced a skilful and effective school team, dealing rigorously with any aspects of underperformance. There is a tangible drive and sense of urgency to provide high-quality learning opportunities. These allow pupils to thrive, and show a searing ambition to eradicate second-best. As a result, improvements in the quality of teaching and learning are accelerating the rates of progress of current pupils across the school.

You have ensured that detailed systems to track pupils' achievement allow teachers to plan extra support and help for pupils who are at risk of falling behind in their learning. The dedicated and skilled work of the inclusion team has significantly enhanced this aspect of the school in supporting pupils' learning. You acknowledge that these tracking systems require further development, as currently they do not allow you, other leaders, governors and teachers to have accurate information on the rates of progress made by pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics.

The whole school team has diligently addressed issues raised at the last inspection. Lessons are now planned carefully to ensure that different levels of challenge are available to pupils, many of whom are skilled at self-selecting the most appropriate pitch of work. Teachers are keen to learn from each other, and arrangements are regularly made to allow strong teaching to be observed by colleagues. The questioning skills of all adults have also improved, and I observed pupils being given

time to think and answer at length in a number of different classes.

From observations in lessons, analysis of your tracking systems and scrutiny of work in pupils' books, it is clear to see significant improvements in the rates of progress made in learning by nearly all pupils. A much larger proportion is working at levels expected for their age and there is also a larger proportion working at a greater depth in learning. You acknowledge that, although differences in pupils' achievement remain between reading and writing compared to mathematics, these differences are diminishing. Similarly, you agree that an even greater proportion of pupils could be working at a greater depth in their learning. You have well-thought-through plans to continue to diminish these differences in pupils' basic skills and reach higher levels of attainment, and have tailored the curriculum accordingly.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations of staff and this is seen in their excellent attitudes to learning in lessons. They work hard and are always keen to produce their very best work. Pupils develop excellent citizenship skills, being keen to take on responsibilities through roles such as being a member of the school council, taking on a monitor's role in each class or as part of the eco-council. Pupils take pride in the well-ordered and extremely tidy school environment, benefiting from quality displays in classes and shared areas, and inspirational 'learning zones' linked to topic work.

You have ensured that pupils benefit from a curriculum that captures their interest through visitors to school and visits to important sites across the region, linked to their topic work. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in musical and sporting opportunities, with the school moving towards 'choir school status', under the inspirational work of the choral director. You agree that the role of subject leaders in areas other than English and mathematics requires further development in monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision in teaching.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

An integral part of the school's exemplary approach to safeguarding and pupils' well-being is the tireless and rigorous work of the inclusion team. Under their watchful eye, no stone is left unturned to ensure that all pupils are safe and have opportunities to thrive. Pupils, in school, report feeling very safe, and have full trust in their teachers and teaching assistants who look after them. This assures me that any minor disputes are immediately and effectively dealt with by all adults.

The curriculum supports pupils well in maintaining their own safety. Pupils know the dangers of social media and understand they should never post personal details online. Policies, procedures and records are of extremely high quality. Detailed records are maintained, including those for any minor behaviour incidents or extremely rare incidents of poor behaviour. Staff training is thorough and up to date, including training to ensure that pupils are kept safe from the risk of extremism and online dangers. Registers of staff training are completed diligently. Staff have access to well-written policies and guidance and have a secure understanding of their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils.

## Inspection findings

- You acknowledge that historic strengths in pupils' progress and achievement in mathematics reflects ongoing strong leadership in that subject. A reorganisation of leadership responsibility in English, involving a number of different leaders, is already having a positive impact on the teaching of reading and writing. The effect of these improvements is beginning to be seen in the progress and attainment made by current pupils, and is clear in work in pupils' books. For example, pupils are increasingly skilled in gathering information from a piece of text using both skills of retrieval and inference. A fresh approach to teaching reading, as a shared class activity, and the systematic teaching of phonics has had a positive impact on pupils' reading skills. The pupils who read to me used expression, and tried to decode unknown words using their phonic knowledge.
- You agree that, over time, the school has successfully supported the learning and progress of pupils of middle and lower ability, including the very large proportion who speak English as an additional language. You acknowledge that, until recently, you had taken your eye off the ball with regard to ensuring stretch and challenge for the most able pupils. During my visit, it was clear to see that this issue is being successfully addressed, and that most lessons are now skilfully planned to ensure differentiated challenge for pupils of different ability. Evidence in school assessment systems, and work in pupils' books, shows that a greater proportion of pupils, in every year group, are now working at a greater depth in their learning, especially in Year 6. Historically, this proportion has been low.
- You have ensured that the school continues to work tirelessly to ensure all pupils are safe and well cared for. The strong relationships in school, and high levels of trust between adults and pupils, ensure that pupils' conduct in lessons and around school is exemplary. Pupils are polite, caring, considerate and friendly to each other and to visitors. Safeguarding is highly effective and the school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is excellent. You have made significant investments in creating a bespoke inclusion team with a remit to support children and families to reach their full potential. Inspirational and vital work from the entire inclusion team allows pupils full access to all learning opportunities. This encourages them to aspire to great things, and supports families in supporting the development and progress of their children. The role played by the inclusion team lies at the heart of the school's work.
- Staff and leaders, at all levels, share the same ambition to eradicate underperformance and work tirelessly to solve problems and make continuous improvements. The skills of staff in supporting, prompting and challenging pupils to produce their very best work can be seen in every lesson. This includes teaching assistants whose impact on pupils' learning is substantial, especially those at risk of falling behind. Every opportunity is taken to inspire pupils to write. For example, in Year 5 pupils developed their writing skills when producing a newspaper report on a bombing raid as part of their work on the Second World War. Pupils in Year 3 were developing in their understanding of basic calculation by matching division statements to pictorial representations when dividing by eight. Year 6 pupils were consolidating their ability to solve addition calculations

of decimals with different denominators, simplifying the answer.

- You acknowledge that the school is in the process of further enriching and enhancing the quality of the curriculum. Nevertheless, a planned and structured approach has ensured that pupils' topic work is the base for most writing activities. You have established enthralling and captivating areas around school such as the rainforest area around the entrance foyer. The singing scheme, led by the choral director and supported by students from Leeds College of Music, has resulted in a range of different choirs in school, including a parents' choir. Many have performed publicly to large audiences. You agree that the skills of subject leaders in promoting developments within their subjects and evaluating the quality of provision are embryonic. Systems to assess and track pupils' progress in subject-specific skills are in the very early stages of development.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' progress and attainment in reading and writing continues to improve so that it matches that found in mathematics
- an increased proportion of pupils work at a greater depth in their learning
- skills of subject leaders to evaluate the quality of provision within their area of responsibility are developed, including embedding systems to assess and track the progress of pupils in subject-specific skills.

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 Leeds. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Philip Scott  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, the key stage 2 and assessment leader and the school business manager. I also met with the chair of the governing body and one other governor. I visited lessons in each key stage alongside you and the deputy headteacher and reviewed a small sample of pupils' workbooks. I spoke to pupils about their work and their views of the school and looked in pupils' workbooks when in lessons. A range of documents was considered relating to safeguarding. I examined the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, the school's monitoring of its own performance and its assessment and tracking of current pupils' progress. I also scrutinised pupils' recent achievement in the 2017 statutory assessments, the 13 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, and the school's website.