

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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



9 February 2018

Mrs Rachel McEvoy  
Headteacher  
Holy Family Catholic Primary School  
Netherton Road  
Worksop  
Nottinghamshire  
S80 2SF

Dear Mrs McEvoy

### **Short inspection of Holy Family Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 30 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 November 2012.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

Since the last inspection, there has been a rapid succession of different headteachers. This has diluted the school's capacity to address the areas identified for improvement at that time. You became headteacher in September 2016 and so you have been in post for just over a year. A deputy headteacher started in September 2017. Leadership is stable, therefore, for the first time in a long while. Governors are knowledgeable and challenging, but the governing body has had to focus on maintaining the school as leaders came and went. It is now working more strategically as governors' confidence grows in the new leadership. The school has improved already since your appointment.

You have identified the strengths and weaknesses of the school quickly and accurately. Plans to improve the school are well formed and actions are clear. Significant change has already taken place. A vision for the school based on five promises has given clear direction for the way forward. Roles have been changed and clarified so that all staff understand their part in the school's journey of improvement. You have emphasised the importance of raising pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. You have also set these subjects within a broad and balanced curriculum that delivers a range of experiences for pupils, including outdoor education, music, philosophy and French.

Teachers now encourage pupils to question, to wonder and to talk about their learning. Staff throughout the school emphasise pupils' spoken and written vocabulary. For example, in a phonics session, pupils in Year 1 responded accurately to technical language such as 'phoneme'. Teachers are responding positively to the clarity of your guidance. They also appreciate your trust in their professional judgement in a range of areas, such as how they provide feedback to the pupils.

Some areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been successfully tackled. For example, the governing body is now taking a central role in helping leaders to improve teaching and to raise attainment. Some older pupils were being challenged more deeply. Pupils in a mathematics lesson, for example, were learning how to calculate interior angles in regular polygons. In an English lesson, pupils reflected on a book they had been reading and on what motivated the characters in it.

Not all of the areas for improvement identified in 2012, however, have been fully dealt with by leaders over the last five years. For example, subject leaders have not yet made sure that pupils' attainment in reading is as good as it is in writing and mathematics. Subject leaders cannot yet routinely show that they have been effective in raising pupils' attainment in their subject. Teaching assistants vary in their effectiveness because time is not always well used to support learning.

Teaching is now having a positive impact on pupils' achievement, particularly in key stage 1 and in parts of key stage 2. For instance, in 2017 an average proportion of pupils in key stage 1 reached the expected standards. Pupils in key stage 2 made similar progress in writing and mathematics to that of pupils nationally.

Nevertheless, achievement is not always as good as this. At the end of the Reception Year, too few children have reached a good level of development in the last few years. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has fallen over the last few years. This decline has not yet been halted. Pupils' progress in reading by the end of key stage 2 placed the school in the lowest 20% of schools nationally in 2016 and 2017. You have recognised the need for urgent action to tackle these issues.

Pupils' conduct in lessons and around school is good. They respond quickly to teachers' instructions and they work well with each other during lessons. Most pupils demonstrate an eagerness to learn and to participate. A few pupils, however, are slower to respond.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have detailed knowledge of the pupils in your school and the difficulties that some of them face. As the school's designated safeguarding officer, you have made sure that staff are trained and they know what to do if they are concerned that a child is at risk of being harmed. Staff knowledge is secure. Recruitment procedures ensure

that the right checks are made. The school's safeguarding policy takes account of the most recent legislation. You ensure that safeguarding records are securely stored. You keep careful track of the school's work with other agencies to ensure that each individual child is protected. Where necessary, you persist in making sure that children get the support they need. The school site is safe. Secure arrangements have been made so that the current building work is kept separate from places where the children learn and play.

### **Inspection findings**

- Reading has been an important focus for this inspection. Leaders and governors have already identified reading as a school priority. New resources have been bought. Teachers have changed their approach to the teaching of reading. There is now evidence that these changes are leading to improved standards in reading. Your tracking of pupils' progress suggests that the percentage of Year 6 pupils working at or above the expected standard is greater than at this time last year. Teaching is stronger but it is inconsistent across year groups. It is not yet good enough, however, to remedy the legacy of underachievement in reading that goes back several years.
- The new deputy headteacher is leading improvement to the teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1. At present, it varies in quality. Some teaching is strong. Pupils then become highly engaged and show understanding of technical language and the sounds that letters make in different combinations. Children in the early years have been making their own books. During the inspection, some of these children took pleasure in 'reading' to each other from the range of books at their disposal. Much phonics teaching is still less effective. Pupils became distracted, for example, when the activities planned did not directly involve them.
- During the inspection, I looked at how well pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are being supported. Pupils who left at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 made good progress from their starting points. Since you joined the school, the attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has improved. This is a reflection of your inclusive vision for the school. Minor improvements are needed to the way information is shared with parents and carers. These include updating names in policies and ensuring that important information is easy for parents to find.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers work with urgency to apply the school's new approaches to the teaching of reading consistently so that more pupils reached the expected and higher standards by the end of key stage 2 in 2018 and beyond
- teachers work with urgency to improve the quality of teaching of phonics so that a greater percentage of pupils reach the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 1 in 2018 and beyond

- they strengthen the knowledge and skills of subject leaders so that they tackle confidently the remaining areas for improvement from the inspection in 2012.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanne Ward  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I considered information from a range of sources, including the previous inspection report and the school's performance between 2015 and 2017. I also reviewed the school's website and read a sample of its published policies. I spoke with parents as they brought their children to school and also considered the 32 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. I read the responses to Ofsted surveys from 21 staff and one pupil. Meetings were held with you, the coordinator for special educational needs, the subject leader for English and with governors to discuss the school's progress since the last inspection. I spoke with the previous chair of the governing body, who has recently stepped down from the role, on the telephone. I considered a range of documentation including: the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan; information kept in school about pupils' attainment and progress; records of recruitment checks on staff and volunteers; a sample of recruitment files; the safeguarding policy and records of actions taken to protect pupils' welfare; minutes of meetings of the governing body; and a sample of provision plans for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. I looked at records of staff training to ensure that they were up to date. I talked with staff to make sure they knew what to do if they were concerned about a child. We jointly made visits to lessons, looked at the quality of work in pupils' books and spoke with pupils about their learning. I observed pupils' behaviour around school and in lessons.