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Mr Stephen Wheatley
Executive Headteacher
Divine Saviour Roman Catholic Primary School
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Dear Mr Wheatley

Short inspection of Divine Saviour Roman Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 March 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 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection.

You have taken effective steps to implement the recommendations arising from your previous inspection. Your work to improve leadership has been significant and has had a marked impact on the quality of education pupils receive. You have made impressive use of opportunities to share best practice in teaching and leadership, both within the school and with a partner school. As a result, you are well supported by senior and middle leaders who understand the school and their roles well.

Prior to your arrival, governors were keen for standards to improve. Because of your clear leadership and commitment to developing staff, this has happened. Through, for example, your chosen use of secondments, which allow teachers to work temporarily in another school, teachers have had the opportunity to thoroughly develop their skills. High-quality questioning is a regular feature of lessons and is used well to make pupils think. Most pupils across the school make at least good progress. In some cases, such as in Year 6, pupils make accelerated progress.

Your work to raise achievement in mathematics has also been effective. In 2017, the progress pupils made by the end of key stage 2 in mathematics was in the top 20% nationally. Pupils in the school continue to make good progress in mathematics because of the good teaching they receive.

Governors have a secure understanding of the strengths and next steps for the school. They share your high ambition for pupils and are rightly proud of what has been achieved. They have well-founded confidence in your leadership, but they are not afraid to challenge you and ensure that you are accountable for pupils' education. Neither they, nor you, are complacent about your successes. Between you, you continue to drive the school to improve further.

Parents and carers appreciate the good work of the school. Almost all of those who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, would recommend the school to others and believe that their children are well taught. Their confidence in the leadership and management of the school is justified.

Safeguarding is effective.

You take a well-considered approach to ensuring that pupils are kept safe. You undertake appropriate checks on adults who work with pupils and have effective systems for recording safeguarding concerns. At the heart of your work is a clear understanding of the risks that pupils might face. For example, while you teach pupils how to keep themselves safe online, you wanted to go one step further to ensure that their parents also have a good understanding of how to protect them online at home. You are persistent in pursuing pupils' well-being and follow up on concerns to make sure pupils' needs are met.

Pupils I spoke with told me there is very little bullying. When it does happen, teachers deal with it well. They told me they enjoy school and that they feel safe. Pupils also told me that the school is welcoming, and that it is okay to be different.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry to establish if the school remains good was to find out if the significant improvement in pupils' progress in reading and mathematics at key stage 2 in 2017 has been sustained for pupils currently at the school. The progress pupils made in reading and in mathematics in 2017 was in the top 20% of pupils nationally. This was significantly better than in 2015 and in 2016.
- Pupils now in key stage 2 continue to make good progress in reading and mathematics. Throughout the key stage, mathematics is well taught and the work pupils do is well structured. This enables pupils to develop well from their starting points. In reading, pupils continue to benefit from your carefully structured reading programme and teaching of comprehension. In Year 6, pupils this year receive additional support from an online resource which they told me helps them to develop their skills. You have been successful in sustaining the improvements of 2017.
- My second line of enquiry was to find out whether you have taken effective action to bring key stage 2 writing outcomes into line with those of reading and mathematics. In 2017, pupils' progress in key stage 2 writing was broadly average.
- You are taking effective action, and pupils' progress in writing is now stronger,

particularly in Years 3 and 6. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are particularly well supported, and they make accelerated progress from their starting points. You recognise that, while pupils in years 4 and 5 are making secure progress in their writing, this could still be improved so that it is as good as in the other years.

- My next line of enquiry related to whether the work for the most able pupils is suitably challenging. The previous inspection report identified the need to make sure these pupils had work which was well matched to their abilities in mathematics. In reading and writing at key stage 2 in 2017, the most able pupils made progress broadly in line with the national average.
- High expectations are evident in many areas of the school. In Year 1, for example, the inspector saw challenging questioning used to help pupils to develop their understanding of phonics quickly. Pupils in Year 6 were seen to quickly apply their newfound understanding of algebra with enthusiasm. Those who struggled were well supported and confident to try, while the most able were challenged to develop their understanding rapidly.
- However, you agree that there is still scope to develop teaching in all year groups so that it consistently provides a high level of challenge for pupils of all abilities.
- My final line of enquiry related to whether you have reduced the level of absence in the school. In 2016 and 2017, absence was higher than average and was particularly high for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Your well-targeted actions, focused on individuals whose absence levels are high, have led to a reduction in absence across the school, including for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Absence rates at the school are now below average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching is further developed so that it is all as strong as the best by ensuring that all teachers consistently provide high levels of challenge
- the progress pupils make in writing continues to improve so that it is consistently strong across all year groups.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrew Hemmings
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke with school leaders, three governors and a representative from the local authority. I visited all classes, accompanied by school leaders, and reviewed pupils' work in their books.

I looked at a range of documentation relating to the school's self-evaluation, development planning, safeguarding arrangements and governance and reviewed school performance and attendance information. I also considered the local authority's evaluation of the progress of the school.

I considered the 93 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 90 written responses to the free text option. There were no responses to the pupil survey or the staff survey. I met with pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 and listened to pupils read.