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Ms Sue Hussey
Headteacher
St Clement and St James CofE Primary School
Penzance Place
London
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Dear Ms Hussey

Short inspection of St Clement and St James CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 March 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, 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 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your team have a shared, accurate understanding of how pupils learn well.

You have addressed an area for improvement from the previous inspection, and now leaders clearly link improvement plans to pupils' progress. Throughout the day, you referred in detail to the progress made by different groups of pupils. You also outlined how you plan carefully the additional teaching that some pupils need in order not to fall behind. A second area for improvement was for teachers to improve the quality of teaching by setting work that is more challenging. We both agreed that further work is needed to ensure that pupils are challenged consistently.

The school's vision and values as a Christian school where children of many faiths are welcomed and included permeates the school and beyond. There is a strong sense of warmth and belonging among pupils, staff, governors and families. The strength of the school as the hub of the local community has been borne out following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, which took place close by. During my day at the school, several people spoke to me to say how the school is supporting the many people who have been and continue to be affected. Families trust the school and value being part of a small community. One parent reported, 'For an inner city school, it really has the feel of a village school. Everyone is made to feel very welcome and is respected.'

Safeguarding is effective

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders, including the school's governors, have ensured that safeguarding is a shared responsibility. The staff I spoke with clearly know their responsibilities for safeguarding the well-being of children. They outlined how they practise safeguarding day to day. The recruitment of staff is systematic and leaders make thorough checks prior to appointment. Recording systems are robust, and the single central record is well maintained. Staff and governors receive regular training, which has included sessions on female genital mutilation, preventing radicalisation and online safety. The school works closely with other agencies which help to protect children, and refers pupils immediately any concerns arise. Records show that follow-up action is timely and supportive to families. Leaders know their families well and work very effectively to ensure that children are safe.

Pupils told me that their teachers and teaching assistants make them feel safe. They learn about staying safe online, and value their discussions in circle time about keeping safe. Staff maintain the school's high expectations for ensuring that pupils are safe when they go out on visits. All the parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, feel that their children are well looked after.

Inspection findings

- We agreed that for my first line of enquiry I would consider the attendance of pupils, and in particular persistent absentees. This was because for the last two years the proportion of pupils with attendance of below 90% has been significantly higher than the national average. However, the percentage of pupils persistently absent from school has reduced and is currently in line with the national average for 2017.
- Leaders track attendance closely for every year group and individual child. They know families and their circumstances extremely well. Leaders have found that meeting with parents on a regular basis to discuss the importance of attending school has made a difference. You have also been proactive in referring pupils to the local authority when an attendance concern continues. The celebration of excellent attendance on every newsletter this year has successfully raised the profile with families.
- Over time, pupils have improved their attendance. The current rate of attendance for all pupils represents an improvement from the same time last year and is very close to the national average. The school has gained the trust of families so that they have continued to send their children to school regularly following the Grenfell Tower fire. However, you agree that the attendance of children in the early years is currently a concern.
- My second line of enquiry looked at how effective teaching is for disadvantaged pupils. The focus on this group of pupils was because in 2017 their progress in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2 was below the national average for all pupils. Progress for disadvantaged pupils in writing at key stage 2 has been significantly below average for two years. Key stage 1 attainment for disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and science was below the national average in 2017.
- There has been some improvement in disadvantaged pupils' achievement at key stages 1 and 2. During our joint visits to classrooms, we found that teachers check pupils'

writing consistently. There was evidence of teachers giving all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, specific direction, both verbally and in writing, on how to improve their work. Where pupils have responded, it was noticeable that their work has improved. We also saw in books how some disadvantaged pupils have developed their sentence structures and descriptive language to improve their writing. We found some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, practising writing at greater depth regularly. These pupils are making good progress. However, more work needs to be done to implement this good practice, as this is not consistent across every year group.

- The third line of inquiry focused on pupils in key stage 1 achieving at greater depth, as in 2017 this was below the national average across subjects. When we looked at books in key stage 1 lessons, we found that, overall, pupils are developing their language skills well. An example of this was pupils using words to compare characters based on a shared class book to enhance their writing. We saw pupils taking risks with their language and writing well at greater depth. The pupils were responding enthusiastically to using literature as a stimulus and were using rich language. Pupils were keen to read their work aloud and did so well.
- A further strand of this line of inquiry was to see whether the improvements made in key stage 1 mathematics in 2017 are being maintained this year. On visiting key stage 1, we found that pupils are positive about their work in mathematics and are making steady progress. There was evidence of teachers planning lessons well, with challenging activities built in for all pupils. It was, however, evident in books that pupils are getting most of their work right. Middle- and high-attaining pupils are completing a lot of easier work before reaching the more challenging activity. To improve further, we agreed that pupils, particularly those with middle and high prior attainment, should be challenged at an earlier stage of their mathematics lessons.
- My final line of inquiry looked at key stage 2 writing and, in particular, the progress made by middle-attaining pupils. This was because this group of pupils made significantly less progress than their peers in writing in 2017. When we looked in pupils' books in the classroom, we saw that the majority of middle-attaining pupils take pride in their work and are progressing well in their writing. This is because teachers use a structured approach to support pupils when teaching challenging writing techniques.
- Disadvantaged middle-attaining pupils, including boys, in Year 6 have responded well to writing for different purposes, which has been interwoven with specific learning focused on grammar. In their books, there are regular examples of writing at greater depth, which has improved well over time. There is some inconsistent practice across other year groups and less evidence of middle-attaining pupils, including boys, practising writing in greater depth. We agreed that this weaker teaching is not enabling them to develop and progress in their writing at this level.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers build on the improvements in writing at key stage 2 to provide a greater consistency of high-quality practice, particularly for middle-attaining pupils and boys
- the reduction in persistent absence continues, particularly for children in the Reception

Year, so that the number of days on which pupils miss school falls further.

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

Yours sincerely

Janice Howkins
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the deputy headteacher, five members of staff, including two middle leaders, a teaching assistant and four governors, including the chair and vice-chair. I also met with the leader responsible for pupil premium funding and with a representative of the local authority. Joint visits to lessons were made with senior leaders. There were formal discussions with groups of pupils as well as informal meetings on the playground. I heard children read. I took account of 18 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments. A range of the school's documentation was considered, including information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, the school evaluation plan, the diocese improvement visit record, safeguarding checking policies and procedures, and information about attendance and exclusions.