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Mrs Joanne Rainey
Acting Headteacher
Christ the King Roman Catholic Primary School, Burnley
Calderbrook Avenue
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Dear Mrs Rainey

Short inspection of Christ the King Roman Catholic Primary School, Burnley

Following my visit to the school on 5 June 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 May 2014.

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.**

Following the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve the achievement of boys in writing and mathematics, including for the most able pupils. The school has found this challenging to achieve. Staff and leaders did not adapt their work well to the higher expectations set out in the new national curriculum. The quality of teaching began to slip. Over the last six months, leaders, staff and governors have started to work successfully together to improve the quality of pupils' education at Christ the King. The quality of teaching is improving quickly. Pupils told me how much they enjoy the more creative ways that staff are now starting to teach them. Pupils are happy and behave thoughtfully in calm classrooms. They respond well to the new arrangements for rewarding their good behaviour.

School information indicates that while pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has improved overall this year, including for the most able, the picture is inconsistent across classes. Leaders and staff are clear that more work is needed to make sure improvements continue at pace.

In the early years, leaders' better training and support for staff are improving the quality of teaching and learning. Staff give children worthwhile opportunities to develop their skills to speak, write, solve mathematical problems and relate well to

other children and to the wider world.

When I met with pupils from key stage 2, I found them to be polite and respectful about other people. Nevertheless, they did not know enough about the contributions of people from different cultures and communities to the world in which they live.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils say they feel safe at school. They are confident to approach staff with any concerns. They told me that staff listen to them and act quickly in response to any issues. Pupils say the behaviour of other pupils is good and that bullying is rare. I found that leaders have a good understanding of safeguarding. They double-check that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders give staff regular access to appropriate training about relevant national and local issues. Staff have a good knowledge of child protection, for example about how to report any concerns they may have about the behaviour or the well-being of adults or pupils. Leaders check carefully the suitability of safeguarding arrangements. Leaders and staff make sure that the curriculum includes a wide range of activities to help pupils to stay safe, for example when online or when cycling along the road.

Inspection findings

- A main focus for this inspection was to consider whether the actions of leaders demonstrate they have the ability to keep on improving the school. It is clear to me that they do. Leaders have an honest and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders and staff recognise that in recent years the school did not adapt well to the demands of the new national curriculum. The quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes faltered. Staff did not work together as well as they should. Some parents and carers became dissatisfied with the quality of their child's learning at the school. In 2017, leaders and governors sought assistance from the local authority. This timely help began to stem any further decline and brought about improvement. The work of leaders has benefited greatly from the support of a headteacher from an outstanding school, who is now the acting headteacher. Staff morale is high because they feel well supported in their work. Parents comment on the positive recent changes in the work of the school. The actions of staff and leaders are improving the quality of teaching. Pupils are enjoying lessons more. While pupils' attainment and progress are improving, too few are working at or beyond national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders and staff are starting to pursue clear and achievable actions to further address this matter.
- Improving learning for boys, particularly the most able, in mathematics and in writing, has been a school priority for some time. Given that the most able boys' attainment in Year 6 in 2017 was disappointing, I wanted to see if staff and leaders are addressing this weakness with due seriousness. You and I observed some most-able boys in key stage 2, writing with confidence in a literacy lesson. Your assessment evidence indicates that the most able boys in Year 6, for example, are learning more successfully because of the better teaching in

reading, writing and mathematics. I found that in the early years, staff give the most able children worthwhile opportunities to write in adult-led and play activities. You have spotted correctly that the most able pupils in key stage 1 need greater challenge from staff to reach high standards in their reading.

- I also considered the work of staff and leaders to improve the teaching of mathematics. This is a current school priority. You are working well with experts from outside the school to improve teaching and learning in this subject. You and I observed activities where the teacher and teaching assistant displayed precise mathematical knowledge. We visited lessons where pupils enthused about mathematics and enjoyed the challenge of explaining their reasoning to one another. The leader for mathematics is clear about what further steps he and staff are taking this year to refine further the quality of teaching. Senior leaders check frequently and in detail the improvements in pupils' work and their achievement.
- Pupils respect differences between people. For example, they respect disabled people and those who have special educational needs. They know not to use the word 'gay' in a derogatory way. Even so, they are not well informed about the contributions made by people from different cultures and communities to the modern world.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the proportion of pupils working at or above national expectations continues to rise in each year group in reading, writing and mathematics
- staff give the most able pupils in key stage 1 greater challenge so they achieve high standards in their reading
- teachers adapt their work precisely to support those pupils who fall behind in their learning so they make better progress
- pupils are more aware of the successful contribution made by people from different cultures and communities to the modern world.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Vaughan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the deputy headteacher to consider your self-evaluation and your evidence of improvement. I reviewed information about the achievements of current pupils. I met with the leaders for English and mathematics. With you, I visited a sample of classrooms to observe activities and spoke with pupils about their learning. I met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke with two representatives of Lancashire local authority. I checked a range of documents, including leaders' action plans for improvement. I spoke with some parents as they brought their children to school. I considered 72 responses from parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including 45 free-text responses. I took into account responses from 19 staff to an Ofsted questionnaire. I examined 64 responses from pupils to an Ofsted survey. I met with a random sample of eight pupils from Year 3 to Year 6. I discussed safeguarding and pupils' safety with governors and senior leaders. I asked some staff and pupils about safeguarding practice. I reviewed the school's single central record of checks on the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers to work with pupils. I also considered a sample of the school's safeguarding records.