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Mrs Alison Woodhead
Headteacher
St Theresa's Catholic Primary School
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Dear Mrs Woodhead

Short inspection of St Theresa's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 July 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 March 2014.

This school continues to be good.

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

Since your appointment you have led the school in a determined and positive way. This reflects your passion for improvement and the provision of high-quality education for all.

You understand your school well and have put measures in place to drive long-term school improvement. Staff and governors support your leadership. Staff enjoy the new initiatives and enjoy the inclusive nature of school improvement. They feel a greater sense of responsibility for the progress of their pupils. Pupil progress meetings target pupils that need extra support. They also identify pupils that will benefit from further challenge.

The inclusive nature of your school ensures that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities have their needs met well. Future plans intend to increase opportunities for these pupils, for example the new initiative for developing the emotional well-being of pupils. You share your good practice in these areas with other schools in your locality.

Pupils are enthusiastic about school. They enjoy the subjects on offer. They describe the school as a 'friendly place', where 'we do fun things in our lessons.' Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have. You provide a wide range of enrichment in your curriculum. Pupils enjoy many experiences at school that they

may otherwise not, for example visits to the beach, seeing magic acts, residential visits and camping in the school grounds. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunities for working outside in your 'Getting beyond four walls' initiative. They appreciate being able to work with others in new learning environments.

Pupils welcome the increase in opportunities to take part in sport. They understand the importance of being active and staying healthy. Pupils enjoy taking part in events with other schools. This enables them to meet and form friendships with others. These are often pupils that they will attend high school with.

Parents and carers enjoy the welcoming, family atmosphere that the school offers. One parent stated, 'This school has an amazing balance between being very professional and super friendly.' They appreciate and understand the changes made by leaders. You are aware that teaching is not consistently good across all key stages. You provide support and guidance to staff where necessary. This has not always had the desired effect of improving standards of teaching for some members of staff.

The teaching of writing is not well developed. Teachers use different strategies in planning and sequencing the process of writing. This is confusing for pupils and limits their progress. You have identified this area as requiring consistency across the school. Work is being carried out to address this. The results of this work will be implemented in the new academic year, but as yet clear monitoring to ensure strong and sustained progress of pupils is not yet in place.

The leadership team has addressed the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. Pupils have increased their ability to use spelling, punctuation and grammar. Handwriting skills are now more consistent. You have a well-developed schedule of sharing good practice. This is not always followed up to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The school has a strong safeguarding culture in which all staff recognise their responsibility to keep children safe. Leaders ensure that all relevant checks required for those working with children are in place. Staff receive regular and effective training and are up to date with current legislation.

Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe in and out of school. They have a particularly strong understanding of how to stay safe online. They understand the possible risks. Pupils are clear when to tell trusted adults if they encounter a difficult situation.

Parents feel that their children are safe at the school. A parent noted that 'they take their safeguarding duties very seriously. My daughters feel safe and well looked after.' Comments by other parents reflect this.

Behaviour around school is good. There are few incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Where these do occur, leaders take swift action.

Inspection findings

- You are ambitious for all pupils at the school. You strive to provide a broad curriculum for your pupils. This includes a wide range of academic subjects and many enrichment opportunities.
- Governors have a good understanding of the quality of education the school provides. They share your ambitions for your pupils. Governors receive timely reports and request more information when required. They visit often and take part in monitoring pupils' progress through work scrutiny. Governors are clear about the priorities for the school. They understand the actions you take for improvement. Governors have had training to enable them to challenge the information you give to them.
- Children get off to a strong start in their learning in the early years. Children confidently learn and play alongside each other. Adults support learning well, while encouraging independence. A range of activities provide support to pupils' understanding of number and writing. I observed Nursery children role playing being teacher and pupils. They were correctly reinforcing methods of counting modelled by staff.
- You are developing pupils' love of reading. You have refurbished the library as an active learning environment. Parents will be encouraged to access this space after school with their children. Pupils have many opportunities for reading, including group and individual reading. Some pupils are reading leaders and their role is to encourage younger pupils to become fluent readers. You have recognised that the ability to read does not always mean that pupils understand what they have read. To address this concern, you have put in place actions to improve the comprehension of text. These actions are now beginning to show an impact. Pupils are showing a greater understanding of their books and texts.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to write at length. This happens not only in English lessons but in other areas of the curriculum. The planning methods for writing, however, are not consistent. This prevents pupils from sustaining their progress when moving on to a new class.
- Teaching is not consistently good or better across all key stages. The quality of teaching in key stage 1 is not as strong as in the other key stages. Pupils can become disengaged with learning that is not always stimulating.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve the quality of teaching in key stage 1 so that all teaching is consistently good or better
- the monitoring of improvements in the teaching of writing is regular and purposeful.

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

Yours sincerely

Sara Roe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I discussed the work of the school with you, the deputy headteacher, the safeguarding team and the lead members of staff for additional funding. I also talked to the school's improvement partner from the local authority and two members of the management committee, including the chair. I examined information about pupils' progress and looked at pupils' workbooks carefully. I checked a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, external evaluations of aspects of the school's work and minutes of meetings of the management committee. I considered 28 written responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, 19 responses to the pupils' survey and 15 responses to the staff survey. I visited all classes to observe teaching, learning and assessment, where I was accompanied by you. A formal discussion was held with six pupils. I talked more informally to pupils in lessons and around school.