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Ms Jameson

Short inspection of St Chad's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 September 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.

This school continues to be good.

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

Governors and senior leaders are clear about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders have rightly identified areas that need further improvement, including pupils' use of phonics to support their writing and the progress of all groups of children in Reception.

The previous inspection recommended that, to improve further, the school ensure that teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are consistently high. Leaders took a range of appropriate actions, including training for staff, and, as a result, staff and pupils talk confidently about the improvements they have made. The report also recommended improved communication with parents and carers. Parents are positive about the school; the majority say their children enjoy school and that they would recommend the school to others.

You are developing leadership at all levels. You work with senior and middle leaders to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Where middle leaders are new to their role, they have the opportunity to work alongside more experienced colleagues.

Pupils are engaged and focused on their learning. They are confident and approach lessons with commitment and enthusiasm. They learn in a calm, friendly atmosphere. The school is a positive, warm and welcoming place where staff and

pupils demonstrate respect for each other. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records related to safeguarding are detailed and accurate. The designated safeguarding lead works effectively with other staff and external agencies. Staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding because training takes place regularly, including on the 'Prevent' duty.

Pupils feel safe in school, and are clear about whom they can approach if they have any concerns or problems. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils are aware that there are threats to their safety outside of school, but talk confidently about how to stay safe and when to seek adult support.

Pupils, parents and staff consider this to be a safe, happy and welcoming school where bullying is rare and concerns about a pupil's well-being are dealt with effectively.

Inspection findings

- The proportion of pupils meeting the national standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check declined over recent years. We agreed, therefore, that the impact of the school's work to improve outcomes in phonics would be our first line of enquiry for the inspection.
- Senior and middle leaders have taken effective actions to raise standards in phonics. These included additional training for staff and a new approach to grouping pupils. Staff are enthusiastic and confident in describing how their teaching of phonics has improved over the last academic year and how they will continue to develop this success this year. Unvalidated results for 2018 show a significant improvement compared to the 2017 outcomes, for all groups of pupils. The school has closely monitored pupils who did not meet the expected standard and has undertaken additional teaching to enable the majority of this group to achieve this by the end of Year 2.
- Leaders are very aware of the need to secure the gains made over the last twelve months to ensure that teaching approaches in phonics are consistent and of a sustained high quality. In particular, pupils' application of phonics knowledge in writing is not yet as strong as in their reading, and for some pupils this is a barrier to success.
- The proportion of Reception children securing a good level of development has been below average for the past three years, so this was my focus for the second line of enquiry for the inspection.
- Leaders implemented a wide range of strategies to improve outcomes at the end of the Reception Year. These included a review of the curriculum to develop the areas of learning that have been less successful historically, including personal, social and emotional development, and communication and language (listening

and attention).

- In addition, leaders undertook a detailed analysis of children's progress and attainment to enable a sharper focus on meeting their needs. This shows some impact in teachers' awareness of children's development.
- Children's work, supported by the school's assessment information, shows that they now make good progress from their starting points. However, there are still occasions when lower-attaining children struggle without support, and higher attainers are not challenged by the writing tasks they are given.
- Our third line of enquiry was to explore the reasons for pupils' strong progress and attainment in mathematics in key stage 2. The school has consistently performed well above the national average in mathematics for the past three years.
- Leaders developed the teaching of mathematics through staff training focused on teachers' subject knowledge and classroom approaches. The teaching is lively and engaging. Teachers plan lessons that develop understanding through well-chosen resources and materials. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking in response to questions and in their mathematics journals. The emphasis on strengthening pupils' understanding and fluency is a feature of teaching that has developed well over the past year.
- Pupils are enthusiastic in commenting on their enjoyment of mathematics lessons. Their work demonstrates strong understanding of number and place value and pupils explain their reasoning skilfully. Even so, a minority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 commented that the level of challenge in mathematics lessons could be increased. Leaders have already begun to address this through staff training and monitoring in lessons.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- provision in Reception is further developed to make sure that children achieve success in all areas of learning, particularly the most able
- the teaching of phonics is strengthened to make sure that pupils develop their ability to apply phonics knowledge in their writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Roddick
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

- The inspector visited lessons jointly with members of the school's senior leadership team.
- While in lessons, the inspector reviewed pupils' work and discussed their learning with them.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to explore the key lines of enquiry and the progress made by the school since the previous inspection.
- The inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, improvement plans and a variety of safeguarding documentation.
- The inspector evaluated the views of 26 parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.