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Mr K. McConnell
Headteacher
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
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Dear Mr McConnell

Short inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 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 March 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You lead the school with dedication and commitment to build on the school's strengths and to eradicate weaknesses. The assistant headteacher is also a strong and effective leader. The role of middle leaders was an area for development after the last inspection. New middle leaders are developing well in their roles, driving up standards in literacy and mathematics. Most urgent priorities, such as improving reading and writing at the highest standards and introducing more reasoning and problem solving in mathematics, are being successfully tackled. Results have risen year on year since the last inspection. By the end of key stage 2, outcomes over time have exceeded age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics and are in line with national averages at the highest levels.

Leaders have a clear vision for the school's future and it is well placed to improve further. You are not complacent, however, and realise that subject leaders need to develop the skills and confidence to promote good learning across the school in their subject area. You also agree that your plans for ongoing school improvement need to be refined, with sharper targets and measurable success criteria. This will enable governors to monitor accurately whether the improvement strategies are successful or not.

Parents I spoke to were keen to praise the teaching staff for their kindness and the respect they have for the children they teach. Several commented that teachers are all very approachable, welcoming and available to speak about any concerns.

Pupils feel safe and cared for well. They enjoy their learning and are proud to attend St Augustine's. They value the support they receive both emotionally and in their learning. Year 6 pupils love being 'buddies' to the youngest children. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is respectful towards one another and their teachers. There is a culture of 'having a go' and pupils are not afraid to ask questions or seek help when they need to. Educational visits are exciting, such as the Year 5 trip to the Planetarium. There is more to be done, however, to maximise how well subjects are linked following such experiences to promote learning at the highest levels.

Safeguarding is effective.

Staff thoroughly check all who work in the school, including governors and visitors, to make sure that they have the clearance, background checks and qualifications to work with children. Training for all staff in safeguarding and child protection is up to date. Detailed records are kept of any safeguarding incidents or concerns to make sure that each child is protected. These show that leaders respond promptly to concerns to make sure that they are treated and tackled seriously. Senior leaders work well with outside agencies to protect children from harm.

Pupils' attendance has consistently been above national averages and records demonstrate that staff go the extra mile to support the very few pupils who are persistently absent.

Inspection findings

- Since the last inspection, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at age-related expectations for all pupils has been above that for schools nationally. Progress measures are also above national comparators. In 2018, the proportion of pupils who attained reading and writing at greater depth improved again as a result of initiatives driven by middle leaders.
- Mathematics attainment at greater depth has been in line with national averages for the last two years. The impact of improving reasoning and problem solving is clear in books. It was especially evident in Year 6, where pupils confidently explained their thought processes to deduce and debate the best method of tackling multi-step problems.
- English, grammar, punctuation and spelling results have also improved year on year and are above national averages both at age-related expectations and greater depth levels.
- Disadvantaged pupils across the school make good progress because of the support they receive. Their progress and attainment match or exceed that of non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported in class and in intervention groups led by skilled teaching assistants. As a result, most make good progress, particularly in mathematics and in reading.
- Standards in phonics at the end of Year 1 have consistently remained above

national averages since the last inspection. Pupils make good use of their phonics knowledge to attempt the use of ambitious vocabulary in their independent writing.

- Children in Reception settle quickly and make good progress. The comment, 'My son comes to school with joy and comes out buzzing about his day,' typifies how happy parents are about the start their children have made in school.
- Developing the wider curriculum to promote learning at the deeper levels across a range of subjects is an area for development. Pupils love the trips and extra-curricular clubs on offer, but topic books show that opportunities are missed to make meaningful links between subjects. Expectations of most-able pupils are not consistently high enough, for example in drawing conclusions from science experiments.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils exemplify the school's values in the respect shown to one another and to adults. There is a purposeful atmosphere in lessons. All ages play well together, and the older pupils show impressive care towards younger ones.
- Governors know the school well. They have a wide range of skills to help them challenge and support school development. You are aware that your current development plans need to be sharper and more precise, with measurable success criteria. This will enable governors to be even more accurate in their assessment of how well the school is doing.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders develop their skills and understanding to drive improvements in the teaching of their subjects across the curriculum
- senior leaders' development planning is sharper, with measurable success criteria, so that governors have a more insightful and acute awareness of the school's effectiveness and the impact of actions to improve the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Lynda Welham

Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, you and I observed learning throughout the school. I spoke to pupils and looked at work in their books with middle leaders. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. I met with representatives from the governing body. I also spoke on the telephone with the school's improvement partner, appointed by the local authority.

I spoke to parents at the start of the day and considered 38 responses, including written comments, to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also analysed 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.

A range of documents was reviewed, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation document, information about pupils' achievement, attendance, behaviour and safety, and records of checks on the safe recruitment of staff.