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Mr Declan Goodwin
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Goodwin

Short inspection of Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 06 November 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 have an ambitious vision that pupils achieve highly, and they thrive as a result of the school's core values of 'Care, Courtesy and Concern'. The school's distinctive and inclusive ethos underpins your work to meet the needs of the school community and determines your priorities for improvement. A skilled and passionate team of leaders supports you well and shares your vision and purpose. Leaders' priorities are well balanced between providing the best care for pupils and holding high expectations for their achievement.

Leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development well. You have provided excellent professional development for middle and senior leaders and they understand their roles in bringing about improvements. Leaders can demonstrate how their actions have improved pupils' achievements, for example for the most able pupils in key stage 2 in recent years. Leaders' improvement plans have clear aims linked to improvements to teaching, which they review regularly to check what is working well. You encourage staff to identify the support and coaching that they need to improve their classroom practice. This approach has helped staff to contribute positively to school priorities. As a result, teaching has improved since the previous inspection and staff share a strong sense of teamwork.

Governors share your passion for the school and provide strong challenge and support for leaders. They are highly reflective and use feedback from a range of sources including the local authority, parents and staff, as well as the school's own

performance information, to set priorities for improvement. They challenge leaders about the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, so that gaps between their progress and that of other pupils nationally continue to diminish.

At your previous inspection, you were asked to improve the challenge that the most able pupils receive in class. At key stage 2, leaders make sure that teachers use information about what pupils know and can do, when they set pupils more challenging tasks. Teachers review pupils' learning carefully and give feedback which helps the most able to deepen their thinking. Consequently, the most able pupils make better progress than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics and this improvement has been sustained in recent years.

You were also asked to improve pupils' rates of progress in writing in key stage 2. You dealt with this by making sure that teachers are skilled in teaching writing and have focused on pupils' speaking, to develop their grammatical accuracy. As a result, most pupils made much stronger progress than others nationally in 2017 and 2018. However, improvements in writing in key stage 1 are not as secure as in key stage 2. Leaders need to ensure in particular that the most able pupils make better progress from their strong starting points in the early years.

Pupils say that they are proud to attend Corpus Christi. They clearly enjoy a range of curriculum subjects and speak highly of the quality of teaching they receive. They show excellent attitudes to learning and strong understanding of their school's values, which 'help us to realise what to do and how to behave'. Older pupils help to make lunchtime sessions inclusive and enjoyable in their roles as 'caring cadets' and sports leaders.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured a strong culture of safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare. Staff are trained well and can identify potential risks. Checks on the suitability of adults who work in and visit the school are well maintained. When staff raise concerns, safeguarding leads follow them up swiftly. Governors oversee safeguarding arrangements well and work with leaders to make sure that they review and improve practice. Leaders review cases regularly and when following up concerns tenaciously with external agencies. Furthermore, leaders go to great lengths to provide additional pastoral support that is carefully matched to the needs of pupils and families.

Pupils feel safe in school and recognise the many ways in which the adults keep them safe, including by teaching them road safety and how to stay safe online. They told me that they find adults to be 'kind and supportive', and know that adults will listen to them if they have a concern. They told me that bullying is very rare but resolved quickly by adults. Most parents agree that pupils are safe in school and that their children are well looked after. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Leaders' work with parents to emphasise the importance of good attendance and punctuality has resulted in fewer pupils missing school without good reason.

Inspection findings

- To determine whether the school remains good, I investigated the teaching of mathematics at key stage 2. I focused on how leaders are ensuring that the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make just as strong progress as other pupils in school. Leaders have acted decisively to review the teaching of mathematics in recent years, and have provided new resources and training to develop teachers' skills.
- Pupils use images and apparatus to help them to understand mathematical concepts and to solve problems. Teachers' questions help pupils to explain their methods and to calculate with increased speed and efficiency. Pupils' workbooks show that the most able are frequently challenged to apply their knowledge to problems which require them to reason and think deeply. As a result, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard across key stage 2 has risen and differences in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers are diminishing. Results of 2018 assessments show that the most able pupils make much better progress than similar pupils nationally.
- Another line of enquiry was to consider how well the most able pupils progress in writing during key stage 1. In recent years, those pupils who leave the early years at the highest standard have not made as much progress as other pupils.
- Current pupils write with fluent handwriting and their spelling accurately reflects their learning in phonics. They use accurate basic punctuation and are beginning to make additions and alterations to their writing based on teachers' feedback. However, the feedback which pupils receive does not always challenge them well enough to extend the range of vocabulary, spelling and grammatical structures that they use. The most able pupils could not explain clearly what they need to do to improve the quality of their writing, nor how teachers help them to strive for the higher standard. Leaders have made this issue a priority and the English leader is focusing on the teaching of the most able in key stage 1 this year.
- In addition, I explored the progress of the small number of pupils with low prior attainment in writing in each class in key stage 2. In recent years, published performance information shows that this group have made less progress than other pupils.
- Currently, pupils' workbooks show that they are making good progress with the fluency and accuracy of their handwriting, which helps them to write at length with greater ease. Teachers also help pupils to write with accuracy by orally rehearsing what they will write, before writing it down. Teachers review the technical quality of pupils' writing with them in class and show them how to edit and improve spelling, grammar and punctuation. In Year 6, low prior-attaining pupils use teachers' questions and feedback in lessons effectively to improve their writing.
- However, these strategies are not always well developed in other classes. For some lower-attaining pupils, errors in spelling, grammar and basic punctuation prevent them from making better progress. Leaders are aware of the needs of this small group of pupils and are already acting to make sure that they make better progress.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils make better progress in writing at key stage 1
- teachers continue to improve the standard of spelling, grammar and punctuation for those with low prior attainment in writing at key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Mirams
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I held meetings with you and your leadership team. We reviewed your plans for improvement and your own evaluation of the school's performance. I observed teaching and reviewed pupils' workbooks together with your head of school. I reviewed workbooks and information about current pupils' performance with your assessment leader and the leaders of mathematics and English. I also met with members of the governing body.

I met with a group of pupils and discussed their viewpoints on the curriculum, behaviour, bullying and keeping safe, including online. I scrutinised various safeguarding records including behaviour records and current information about school attendance. I met with your inclusion leader. I spoke to a representative of Bournemouth local authority on the telephone.

I also considered 44 responses to the staff survey, 69 responses to the pupil survey and 64 parent responses to the online survey, Parent View.