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Mrs Cecilia Knight
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Cecilia Knight

Short inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Otley

Following my visit to the school on 7 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 November 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your deputy lead and manage your team with enthusiasm, passion and integrity. You are particularly proud of the wide range of opportunities you provide to the pupils in your care. As you say, 'If there's something happening, St Joseph's are the first to sign up and be involved.' Consequently, pupils benefit from a wide range of enhancements to the curriculum, including national competitions, strong links with the local church and community and a raft of visits and visitors. You know your school well and are refining your work in order to bring about the further improvements you want to achieve. Regular work with other headteachers from within the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust (the trust) provides external evaluation of your work and creates opportunities for you to evaluate the work of other schools.

St Joseph's is a happy school. Staff are proud to work there and feel valued and respected. A high proportion of parents responded extremely positively to Ofsted's Parent View survey. Parents recognise the work you do and value the creative approach to the curriculum. One parent wrote, 'I feel my child will go through the primary years with so many happy memories.' Another parent wrote, 'The faith element is seamlessly interwoven into school life.' Many parents state how approachable you and your staff are and appreciate how you greet them every morning in the playground. Pupils say they are happy at school because teachers are funny and help them to learn. They talk enthusiastically about the many visits and visitors they have had over the years. Behaviour across the school is consistently good.

You have focused on the areas for improvement identified at your previous inspection. You have been successful in increasing attainment and rates of progress in mathematics in key stage 2, particularly for higher-ability pupils. Girls' outcomes are particularly strong. You acknowledge that boys' achievement has not been as strong, but you are beginning to see some improvements. You know these successes need to be maintained and built upon.

The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are not as strong as those of other pupils in the school. The progress of this group is better in mathematics than in English.

Governors receive regular, detailed analyses of achievement. As a result, they know what the school is doing well and where improvements need to be made. They particularly value the strong spiritual and moral ethos you and your team have created. Along with the trust, they provide appropriate challenge and support.

Safeguarding is effective.

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have ensured that all staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding. All new staff receive a thorough induction, including safeguarding training. Staff know who to speak to if they have any concerns. Your large safeguarding team ensures that pupils' welfare is a high priority. You work closely with other agencies and professionals. The school's specialist welfare worker provides support for both pupils and their families. Confidential documentation is kept securely and reviewed regularly. Information provided both to staff and to parents is clear and prominent around school and on the school's website. Key staff have received safer recruitment training and your recruitment files demonstrate attention to detail. Pupils say they feel safe and know who to speak to if they have concerns. Parents are confident that the school keeps their children safe.

Inspection findings

- Since the last inspection, you have improved the quality of teaching in order to raise standards further and accelerate rates of progress. You have had the most success with your most-able pupils, who make accelerated rates of progress in all subjects. You were particularly asked to improve standards in mathematics, which you have done. A higher proportion of pupils are now reaching both the expected standard and greater depth. This is because the leader of mathematics is passionate and knowledgeable about her subject. She has introduced new ways of teaching to increase mathematical knowledge and carries out regular checks to ensure that teaching is consistent. A stronger emphasis on pictorial recording is helping those pupils who are less confident to understand what is being taught and is helping to consolidate learning for the most able. Regular observations of teaching check that weaknesses identified earlier are addressed, resulting in sustained improvements. Alongside this, regular meetings to check pupils' progress ensure that teachers are held fully accountable for the progress of all pupils. You have taken advantage of specialist mathematics teachers from a

local high school to work with your most able pupils in order to challenge and support their learning.

- Other subjects benefit from the changes you have implemented to assessment and feedback. Pre-assessments before topics begin allow teachers to plan work that more accurately meets the needs of pupils in their classes. Carrying out ongoing assessment and feedback throughout lessons enables teachers to quickly regroup pupils in order to pick up misconceptions and revisit objectives later in the day.
- Teachers are beginning to make helpful links so that learning is more meaningful for pupils. For example, pupils working out the mean average had collected data linked to your work on the First World War and used this to find out about the average age of soldiers killed in Otley.
- I wanted to find out why attainment and progress rates for disadvantaged pupils are considerably lower than those of other pupils at the school. While you provide strong pastoral and welfare support for this group of pupils, very few reach the expected standard, and none reach greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. You recognise that your pupil premium planning and evaluation need to be strengthened. You use a variety of support programmes for all pupils in this group and can show where they have been successful. Recent changes to teaching and learning have resulted in better rates of progress in mathematics but are not evident in reading and writing.
- Overall standards across subjects are above the national average. However, this is because girls achieve particularly highly. Boys' attainment and rates of progress are not as strong as those of girls. You have successfully addressed this in mathematics and a much higher proportion of boys reached greater depth in grammar, spelling and punctuation than seen previously. You have reviewed the curriculum to ensure that more books and topics that are appealing to boys are covered. You are keeping a close eye on the progress of boys. Early Years outcomes show that teaching has been successful in meeting the needs of boys.
- I looked at how your curriculum is designed. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It builds on key knowledge and skills as children progress through the school. You have involved pupils in the design of some aspects through your additional topics in which they have some say. Pupils enjoy the variety of topics and talk enthusiastically about the magician who visited recently. You make excellent use of visits and visitors to enhance learning, and teachers use these experiences well throughout their planning. During the inspection, pupils were taking part in a science day and the whole school was working with the NSPCC (the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) on how to keep safe. Your curriculum is varied, interesting and appropriate to your school. You use current events to further enhance learning. Work on the First World War resulted in a dazzling array of poppies arranged outside the entrance to school. You promote tolerance and understanding of both the Catholic faith and of other cultures and religions through a range of work and visits to other places of worship. You are planning to review your curriculum later in the year to make further improvements to links between subjects. Parents appreciate the weekly assemblies where successes are celebrated. They recognise that curriculum

planning takes into account the interests of their children and say their children are enthusiastic learners. One parent commented: 'I am particularly happy with the school's promotion of the wider curriculum around arts, music and culture, with trips to the theatre and outside agencies coming in to broaden the children's experiences.'

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the progress of disadvantaged pupils across all key stages is accelerated so that the gap between this group of pupils and others within the school closes quickly.
- the current attainment and rates of progress for boys across the school continue to improve in order to close the gap between boys and girls.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Leeds (RC), the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leeds. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Lunn
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited several classes with you and your deputy headteacher to observe pupils' learning. I scrutinised a range of pupils' workbooks, particularly in mathematics and across the foundation subjects. I met with you, your deputy, governors and the chair of the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust. I looked at the school's information on safeguarding and checked your procedures for safer recruitment. I checked health and safety records and behaviour logs. You provided a range of other documentation, including self-evaluation, governor minutes and data analysis. I held formal discussions with a group of disadvantaged pupils and spoke informally to several pupils at lunchtime. I listened to pupils from Years 2 and 6 read. I considered all responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires, including 77 pupil responses, 19 staff responses and 76 written responses from parents.