

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



26 November 2018

Mrs Sarah Coggins
Executive Headteacher
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
North Road
Wellington
Telford
Shropshire
TF1 3ER

Dear Mrs Coggins

Short inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 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 October 2013.

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 leaders are ambitious for the school and strive for continuous improvement. The key priorities in your school development plan demonstrate accurate self-evaluation. Together with other leaders in the school you have identified the appropriate strengths and weaknesses. Improvement areas are well communicated to subject leaders across the school, ensuring that there is a collective responsibility for whole school improvement.

Your open and inclusive approach typifies the culture of the school. This is evident in a variety of ways, not least from the high level of staff morale. You have ensured that all staff have been provided with the appropriate skills and knowledge to support pupils effectively. This has been particularly valuable to staff members new to teaching.

You and your leaders recognise each child as an individual and have an in-depth knowledge of your pupils and their families. Parents and carers are appreciative of leaders' commitment to the school and speak of a welcoming environment where 'nothing is too much trouble'. Pupil comments also reflected these views; they highly value the support they receive and thoroughly enjoy their time at school.

Pupils are polite and well-mannered and their conduct throughout the school is excellent. The inclusive ethos you have fostered is reflected in pupils' attitudes. They show great care and kindness in their interactions and are respectful of each

other's feelings. These positive attitudes are further reflected in their classroom activities. Pupils take pride in their work and cooperate well together in lessons.

Leaders have addressed the areas for improvement highlighted in the last inspection. Staff now give pupils more opportunities to think and work things out for themselves. This was evident in a key stage 2 mathematics lesson where pupils were articulating how to solve calculations. These pupils were able to identify a range of solutions and staff challenged them to explain their reasoning. You have also developed a system that allows you to record the academic performance of pupils in each year. You use this information effectively to inform the next steps in pupils' learning.

Since the last inspection, the leadership structure of the school has changed. In September 2018, you became executive headteacher over two schools. The governing body reconstituted to create one governing body over two schools. There are some governors who are new to their roles, such as the safeguarding governor. Despite these changes, you and the governing body have maintained your high expectations and have continued to improve outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are effective and fit for purpose. All adults at the school, including governors, take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. Records for checking staff suitability to work with children are meticulously kept.

The designated safeguarding leader ensures that staff, including governors, are provided with regular and effective training. You make frequent checks to ensure that all adults understand their responsibilities. All safeguarding referrals are made in a timely manner and you and your team are determined that all families receive the support they need.

Pupils state that they feel safe in school and that any incidents of bullying are swiftly dealt with. They said that playtimes are enjoyable because other children will, 'ask you to play with them if you are on your own'. Pupils know who to go to if they have concerns about an issue and are confident that any staff member will help them.

You have also ensured that pupils take an active role in promoting safeguarding across the school through the development of the pupil 'safeguarding committee'. These pupils help to promote important safeguarding messages through assemblies and role play. They meet with you and your team regularly and understand the importance of keeping themselves and the school community safe.

Inspection findings

- One of the focus areas for the inspection was to see if pupils in mathematics are provided with work that is sufficiently challenging. This was because in 2018 key

stage 2 progress in this area declined. This decline has been swiftly addressed. You and your leaders have ensured that staff are provided with regular training to maintain a clear focus on high-quality teaching. In lessons, pupils are increasingly able to solve complex mathematical problems. They are able to articulate the approaches they use to help them solve calculations and can explain the reason for their choice of mathematical strategy. School assessment information shows that those pupils who are expected to exceed age-related expectations are on track to do so.

- We also looked at the actions you have taken in order to ensure that pupils across key stage 2 are provided with the appropriate level of challenge. You and your senior team have paid close attention to this area and provided staff with a range of professional learning opportunities. You have focused on a collaborative approach so that your teachers can learn effective strategies from one another. This has helped those teachers new to the profession to develop their practice. In lessons, the work you have done to develop questioning skills was evident. Teachers now ask probing questions which allow pupils to refine their answers and develop their skills. Pupils have responded well to this approach and have heightened their own expectations of what they are capable of. However, you and your senior team recognise that more needs to be done to develop this area, so that the most able pupils are able to achieve the standards they are capable of in key stage 2.
- You have introduced a wide range of strategies to support those pupils who are disadvantaged. You and your team understand that these pupils, although only a small proportion of the school community, do not consistently achieve as well as other pupils. You are relentless in exploring ways that outcomes for this group of pupils can be improved. You provide a raft of bespoke pastoral care strategies and have worked tirelessly to improve attendance. As a result of these actions, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are now persistently absent from school has decreased from above the national average to currently being below national averages for this group.
- We looked at examples of disadvantaged pupils' work and it was evident that they are provided with work that is well matched to their needs. As a result of your actions, progress for disadvantaged pupils is improving. You and your senior team acknowledge that you now need to more closely monitor the impact of the strategies implemented for this group; something that is highlighted in the school development plan. You are working collaboratively with an external group to support this improvement and receive useful support from an external consultant to develop your approach. You also understand that your plans for pupil premium spending need to be more precise so that you can provide greater clarity on how the actions you have taken have impacted on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes.
- Finally, I spoke to governors. This governing body was reconstituted in 2018 due to the school federating with another school. During this period of transition, some members of the governing body have changed. These changes have been handled expertly by yourself and governors. There has been clear communication with all stakeholders and both you and governors have ensured that appropriate consultations have taken place, as highlighted in governor minutes. Even though there have been structural changes in governance, this has had no impact on the

quality of education at the school.

- Governors are highly skilled, and they have an excellent knowledge of the current performance of the school. They undertake regular visits and provide detailed and purposeful visit notes that they share with other members of the governing body. Governors with whom I spoke are completely committed to their role. They could clearly articulate the strengths in provision, such as provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and key stage 1 outcomes. They also understood the areas that needed improving, such as a more precise evaluation of both the pupil premium plan and the sports premium plan. The governing body provides both you and your team not only with appropriate challenge but also effective support. Together you create a highly effective team.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers in key stage 2 continue to further sharpen the challenge for most-able pupils so that they are able to achieve the highest possible standards
- leaders provide a more precise evaluation of the impact of pupil premium funding.

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

Yours sincerely

Josie Leese
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the deputy headteacher to discuss your self-evaluation and your plans for improvement. We also discussed the work of the school to safeguard pupils and support their behaviour. Along with yourself and the deputy headteacher, we visited a sample of classrooms, looked at examples of pupils' work and spoke with pupils about their learning. I met with the subject leader for mathematics to discuss current improvement strategies and looked at examples of pupils' work in their books.

I met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke to an external consultant. I met with a group of eight pupils, chosen at random from Years 3 to 6, to discuss aspects of their personal development, behaviour and welfare. I spoke with pupils in classrooms and around the school. There were no responses from pupils to the Ofsted online survey. I spoke to several parents as

they collected their children from school. I examined the 43 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire. I took into account a further 18 responses from staff to the Ofsted online questionnaire. I checked a sample of your records about the safeguarding and behaviour of pupils. I reviewed your records of checks on the suitability of staff, volunteers and governors to work with pupils.