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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Anita Blake
Headteacher
St Edmund Campion Catholic Primary School
Tewkesbury Close
West Bridgford
Nottingham
Nottinghamshire
NG2 5NH

Dear Mrs Blake

Short inspection of St Edmund Campion Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 February 2019, 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 June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection will be a section 5 inspection.

You have provided focus, drive and strong leadership to successfully raise aspirations in all aspects of school life. Staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers share and contribute to your vision and are all proud to be a part of St Edmund Campion School. One parent explained, 'The ethos is all encompassing, allowing children to develop as people.' You have built a knowledgeable and determined leadership team who drive through initiatives and take everyone along with them. Staff feel very well supported and appreciate the professional development opportunities given to them to improve their practice. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and think it is, 'The best ever!'

Since the last inspection, standards have risen throughout the school because there has been increased emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and insisting on high expectations for all pupils. Areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been successfully addressed.

The introduction of additional daily mathematics lessons has helped to sharpen pupils' number skills and increase their rapid recall of mathematical facts. Pupils are keen to improve their mental arithmetic skills and particularly look forward to the regular times-tables 'class battles'. Throughout the week there are numerous opportunities for pupils to explore mathematical problems, apply their knowledge to the tasks they are set and successfully develop their reasoning skills. As a result, pupils make consistently strong progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are extremely well supported. Tasks are carefully planned to meet the needs of the individual and the majority of pupils with SEND make good progress.

Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 are not as high as they are in reading and mathematics. Although almost all pupils attain the expected standard in writing, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher standard is lower than in reading and mathematics. The leadership team has identified a gap between the standards attained by boys and girls and is keen to improve the progress made by boys so that they attain equally high standards. Topics are designed around a class text and particular attention is now being given to selecting books that will appeal to boys, so that they are engaged and motivated to write. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows this is proving beneficial. The skills learned by boys as part of the English curriculum are now being applied to their writing in other subjects and standards are improving. Initiatives such as 'silent debate' are also encouraging more pupils to reflect on their own opinions and write at a higher standard.

Considerable research has been undertaken by senior leaders to improve the quality of dialogue between teachers and pupils. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that improved dialogue is proving successful in increasing learning in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils are equipped with several strategies to seek help with their work. They find the flexible seating in the classroom a good way of identifying whether they can work independently or whether they need more support from the teacher. Recent initiatives to develop greater belief in pupils' own abilities and to promote the school's 'five Rs' are beginning to permeate the curriculum and have an impact on pupils' personal development, particularly their resilience and perseverance.

A calm, purposeful atmosphere permeates all classes and areas around the school. Learning spaces are well organised; displays are informative and reflect the interesting curriculum across the school. Pupils, without exception, show positive attitudes to learning and exemplary manners and behave extremely well. On my visits to classes pupils were engaged in their tasks, often working in collaboration with another pupil and demonstrating interest and enthusiasm for the activity. Children in Reception were excitedly talking about the Chinese New Year while they made lanterns. Year 1 pupils were confidently describing their pet's illness. Many classes were engaged in mathematical activities and all pupils were concentrating on their work and making good progress. In Year 6, pupils were animated and engaged in pertinent conversations about how to improve a passage of writing about Macbeth. The presentation in pupils' books is of a high standard and pupils take great pride in their work. There is a true learning buzz at St Edmund Campion.

Governors are committed to helping you make improvements through the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. They use their experience effectively and work strategically to improve the provision across the school to keep pupils safe, increase academic standards and ensure that pupils' personal development is central to the curriculum.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders, including governors, have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are effective and that policies are consistently followed and applied. A vigilant culture of safeguarding is evident throughout the school. Child protection records are carefully documented, and information is thorough. There are effective systems in place to ensure that all staff are kept up to date with new safeguarding protocols. Safeguarding is a standard item on the agenda at staff meetings. This means that every member of staff is kept up to date and can support pupils and families appropriately.

The faith and families worker provides invaluable support to pupils, families and staff. She is an integral part of the safeguarding team and liaises with other agencies to provide much-needed advice, counselling and therapy. She works closely with secondary colleagues, providing continuity of information and support when pupils and families move school.

You have ensured that all staff and governors are trained well so that they are knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of abuse and radicalisation. This training has recently resulted in the administrative team identifying a child protection issue which was immediately acted upon.

Pupils feel safe because there is always someone they can talk to if they are worried. They understand about how to use the internet safely as well as keeping themselves safe in other aspects of their life. The outcomes of the pupil survey, supported by the conversations with pupils I met, indicate that there is very little bullying at school. Instances are rare and dealt with effectively. Pupils value each other and respect people from other faiths and cultures. They welcome any new pupils into school and all 'chip in' to make them feel at home.

Inspection findings

- You have built and galvanised a strong team of staff and governors. Senior, middle and subject leaders know the strengths of their areas of responsibility and what needs to be improved. Initiatives are well researched, and staff are outward looking, seeking the right initiative to improve provision. Professional development is of a high quality and is successful in improving practice. Governors ensure that staff training and well-being are given a high priority, recognising the importance of a happy and well-supported team.
- The monitoring of progress towards priorities within the school improvement plan is strong. There is a rigorous cycle of analysing pupils' progress to quickly identify those who are falling behind. Swift action is taken to give pupils additional

support so that they can quickly get back on track. Senior leaders have detailed knowledge of the strength of teaching throughout the school. More experienced and highly competent practitioners are paired with newly appointed staff to support them and raise the quality of teaching and develop leadership skills.

- You engage with local and wider networks to develop the quality of teaching, and your staff work collaboratively with many schools across the academy trust. Trust executives recognise the wide-ranging expertise that you and your staff offer and appreciate the support and guidance given to other schools.
- Children enter school from a wide range of nursery settings and start in the Reception class with skills that are usually above those typical for their age. From the outset, expectations and aspirations are high and pupils make strong progress. Phonics is taught well, and pupils apply this knowledge to their reading and spelling. By the end of Year 2 all pupils attain the expected standard and the proportion of pupils working successfully at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average.
- Highly effective teaching in key stage 2 ensures that almost all pupils reach the expected standard by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Particularly strong progress has been sustained over the past three years in reading and mathematics, leading to a greater proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard than the national average. Being complacent is not an option for you and your team; every member of staff and governor is determined to provide the best learning experience possible for every pupil.
- The curriculum is rich, vibrant and full of exciting opportunities. French and German are taught in a lively and engaging way and pupils look forward to visiting Berlin in Year 5. Music and sport are given a high priority and pupils are encouraged to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities. Residential visits, forest schools, theatre trips and themed days are all part and parcel of what is on offer. Attendance is above average. Pupils work hard, enjoy their learning and are ambitious for their futures.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all pupils are challenged to enable a greater proportion of them to flourish as writers and attain the higher standard by the end of Year 6
- teachers further strengthen pupils' attitudes to learning by promoting greater resilience and perseverance in all aspects of their development.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Nottingham, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Nottinghamshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kate Nash
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher and six other leaders. I also met with pupils, the faith and families worker and members of the administrative team. I met with six governors, including the chair of the governing body, and the chief executive officer and head of learning from the academy trust. Along with a member of the senior leadership team, I visited nearly all classes, observing the learning taking place and engaging in conversation with pupils about their work. Together with the leadership team, I examined a wide sample of pupils' books and discussed levels of progress and attainment in the different year groups.

I examined a range of documentation, including that related to the school's self-evaluation, the improvement plans and the safeguarding of pupils. I examined the school's website to check that it meets the requirements on the publication of the specified information. We viewed a range of documents including those related to attendance and behaviour and I analysed how the pupil premium funding had been spent. I analysed the 126 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, 26 staff questionnaire responses and 141 pupil questionnaire responses.