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Miss Margaret Falvey
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Falvey

Short inspection of St Peter-in-Chains RC Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 13 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 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. St Peter-in-Chains is a warm and friendly school where pupils are sociable and enthusiastic. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and productive. Pupils come into the school keen, smiling and ready to learn. Parents and carers are very positive about all that the school provides. Those spoken with could not be happier with how their children have settled into Reception, and how they learn to read with confidence. Others spoke of the long distance they travel to bring their children to a school, they say, that provides children and families with a strong sense of community. Of the large majority who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, almost all would recommend the school to others.

You provide pupils with a rich and varied curriculum. Pupils enjoy specialist teaching and learning of music. For example, children receive a good introduction to understanding music notation, rhythm and percussion, as evidenced when observing in the Reception class. Corridors display pupils' good-quality artwork inspired by the work of Vincent Van Gogh, demonstrating pupils' strong skills in a range of techniques that they used to recreate his painting.

All staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey said they are proud to be a member at the school. They are determined and keen to do their best for all pupils. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge, particularly in English and mathematics, and inspire pupils to want to learn. They capture pupils' interests by immersing them in topics so that they can write with knowledge and confidence. For example, pupils were visited by a 'Victorian' headteacher who gave them an insight into Victorian

school life. Pupils dressed in Victorian clothes and became involved in the experience. They spoke about the appalling way children were treated, particularly if 'you were left handed'. This experience gave pupils a good stimulus to write at length about their day. As a result, they produced detailed and good-quality writing about the event.

Leaders have made good progress in addressing areas identified in the previous inspection. You have worked successfully with external advisers to strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics and English. Published information for the last two years shows that pupils at the end of Year 2 attain above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. A high proportion of pupils achieve at the higher standards. Most children in Reception achieve a good level of development, and a high proportion of pupils meet the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1.

You and your leaders work well with local nursery schools to ensure that there is a smooth entry into Reception class. In addition, the school's recent federation with the local junior school supports leaders to work together. This strengthens transition arrangements between the two schools, as well as promoting opportunities to share best practice.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your staff know pupils very well. Staff are vigilant, and any concerns about pupils' welfare are raised immediately. You have effective procedures to report and record concerns. You follow these up swiftly, as designated leader for safeguarding. The school's check on employees and other adults who work with pupils are meticulously maintained. Employees' files hold the relevant and mandatory information. All staff know and understand their responsibilities in terms of safeguarding pupils and have completed safeguarding training that includes protecting pupils against radicalisation.

Staff, parents and pupils say that pupils are safe. In addition, staff have an awareness of the issues surrounding the County Lines campaign. Pupils are taught to stay safe when online, and the school holds workshops to raise awareness among staff, pupils and parents. Governors are fully aware of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding pupils. They routinely check the single central register and have had relevant safeguarding training that includes safer recruitment.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in and out of the classroom. They are polite and respectful to adults. In lessons, pupils display positive attitudes to their learning, and engage fully when working independently. They listen carefully to adults and participate enthusiastically in class activities. Parents and staff that responded to Ofsted's surveys said that pupils are well behaved, and that behaviour is managed effectively.

Inspection findings

- In light of the previous inspection, leaders' work to develop pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding in mathematics has had a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. In lessons, there is a strong focus on ensuring that pupils understand and use the correct vocabulary. Pupils are provided with activities that challenge them and require them to think carefully about their answers. Adults encourage pupils to justify their answers. Pupils' workbooks show that they explore different ways to solve problems and make jottings to help their understanding.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to assess children's understanding and address any misconceptions. For example, in Reception class, children were learning about the value of money and how to pay for items with coins. Children thought that the word 'expensive' meant bigger, and 'cheaper' smaller. The teacher explained that items did not have to be big to be expensive and explained the words expensive and cheaper in terms of monetary value.
- Pupils are supported in their mathematical understanding with a range of resources that help them to develop their understanding of number. In Year 1, for example, pupils confidently use equipment to help them understand the relationship of place value. They can order two-digit numbers from the smallest to the greatest and use resources to help them articulate why one number is greater than another.
- It is clear in lessons that pupils enjoy mathematics. Pupils' workbooks and leaders' progress and attainment information show that pupils make strong progress across all year groups. Published information shows that this has been consistent for the last two years. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard is above the national average and increasing year on year.
- We discussed in detail the actions you have taken to raise achievement in writing, particularly for boys, as this was an area highlighted for improvement in the previous inspection. Work in lessons and pupils' books shows that pupils are confident writers and write at length. Boys told me that they enjoy writing and that topics selected inspire them to write. Pupils in Year 2 wrote about 'The iron man', where they built on their previous work on adjectives to write detailed descriptions of the character. They were encouraged to use similes, questions and a wide range of vocabulary and punctuation. Boys in Year 1 told me that they needed to use 'time adverbials' when retelling a non-fiction event. This was subsequently evident in their work. Examples of boys' writing demonstrated that they are able to produce interesting compositions, applying grammar and punctuation skills with increasing accuracy.
- Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that pupils' writing is of a good standard. Pupils are keen to write and can extend their sentences by using conjunctions and adjectives appropriately. However, some pupils make the same errors in several pieces of work, over a significant time span, without correction. Pupils do not always know precisely how to improve their work.
- Another area identified at the previous inspection was to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that teachers focus sharply on all groups of pupils. There is clear evidence that leaders check pupils' progress routinely. Leaders,

including the special educational needs coordinator, work with teachers to ensure that pupils who are not on track are provided with small-group support. The impact of additional support is reviewed half termly, and impact is measured effectively. The school's progress information, pupils' work and observing in lessons demonstrates that pupils who speak English as an additional language thrive, with precise support. Vulnerable pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in the school's nurturing environment. They make good or better progress in almost all aspects of learning from their varying starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide pupils with precise next steps for improving their work, particularly in writing, so that they can move on more quickly in their learning and make even better progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Cindy Impey
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

We discussed the lines of enquiry for this inspection, areas for further improvement and information about pupils' attainment and progress. I visited all classes and held meetings with you, senior leaders, governors and your school improvement consultant. I spoke with pupils informally, and I also spoke with some parents at the beginning of the school day. I examined documents and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils. I gathered a range of evidence to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and assessment, particularly in English and mathematics. This included joint meetings with you, your deputy headteacher and the subject leader of mathematics. I looked at a range of pupils' work across a range of abilities. The views of 82 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered, as well as responses parents made using the free-text service. I also considered 15 responses from staff.