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Mr Jon LeFevre  
Headteacher  
Pilgrims' Cross CofE Aided Primary School  
Picket Twenty Way  
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Dear Mr LeFevre

### **Short inspection of Pilgrims' Cross CofE Aided Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 28 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.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

You have built an enthusiastic and hard-working staff team who share your commitment. There is a strong sense of teamwork. Since you joined the school in 2015, you have worked with the school community to establish a clear vision which is shared and understood by everyone. This is underpinned by your strong moral purpose to do the best for every pupil at Pilgrims' Cross. Staff care deeply about pupils, and their well-being and safety are at the heart of the school's work. Governors support the school well and work in close partnership with you. They are well informed through their visits to the school and the timely information they receive from you.

The school is a happy community which pupils enjoy coming to, saying that their teachers make learning enjoyable and interesting. They particularly enjoy the school's special occasions, such as dressing-up days to launch new topics. The school environment is attractive and enhanced with bright, colourful displays. Pupils appreciate the extra responsibilities they have, such as being sports leaders and belonging to the junior leadership team. You are working hard to strengthen behaviour on the playground during lunchtime, which you have identified as an area for improvement. Pupils confirmed that during lunchtimes there is sometimes rough play and that some pupils do not demonstrate the school's values of 'love, courage and trust'. However, in class, pupils behave well and classrooms are settled and

purposeful environments for learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and supportive. Parents and carers wholeheartedly support the school. They particularly value the school's strong ethos and the encouragement and help the school gives their children. As one parent commented: 'My children and our family have been brilliantly supported and the school has a wonderful atmosphere. The staff are so committed and really go the extra mile.'

When the school was last inspected, leaders were asked to improve the school further by raising pupils' achievement. Inspectors also asked leaders to strengthen the impact of leadership by developing the capacity of subject leaders. Your good work has led to improved standards in key stage 1. Attainment in key stage 1 is now at or above the national average in all subjects and a higher than average proportion of pupils exceed the expected standards. Last year was the first cohort of Year 6 pupils at the school. These pupils made good progress in reading and writing, but progress was significantly below average in mathematics. A lower than average proportion achieved the expected standard in the combined reading, writing and mathematics and no pupils achieved the higher combined standard. Due to the growth of the school and staff changes, subject leadership is at an early stage of development. You are wisely developing the role of subject leaders to enable them to play a fuller role in improving teaching and learning.

You have a good understanding of the school's strengths and where improvements are needed. You acknowledge that there is some variability in the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics across key stage 2. As a result, pupils are not making consistently good progress and your work to improve standards has been hampered by recent staff changes. You are in the process of introducing a new system of assessment which has not yet been fully embedded. This means that it is currently difficult for you and other leaders to have a clear strategic oversight of pupils' progress. The school's improvement plan and pupil premium spending plan set out the right priorities. However, they do not include precise, succinct success criteria to enable leaders and governors to evaluate the impact of these plans.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The strong culture of safeguarding is a strength of the school. Leaders and other staff are knowledgeable and skilled, and the school's records are of high quality. Families benefit from the effective early help from the family support worker and other specially trained staff. When needed, leaders refer concerns to external agencies. They also stringently follow up and pursue any worries with other agencies, making sure that pupils and their families receive the support they need. Leaders are confident in challenging other agencies if they do not receive a speedy enough or appropriate response.

Pupils feel safe and know that they can always speak to a member of staff if they have any anxieties. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep safe when using the internet. They know the importance of reporting any worries and of not sharing personal information. The vast majority of parents agree that their children feel safe in school. Staff also agree that pupils at Pilgrims' Cross are safe.

## Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we considered the effectiveness of leaders' work to improve pupils' progress in mathematics in key stage 2. You have carefully analysed pupils' outcomes from the previous year. This helped you to identify that reasoning and problem solving were weaker aspects of pupils' learning. You launched a new scheme of work and have started to address those weaknesses. However, you acknowledge that while there have been some improvements, these are yet to be embedded and pupils' progress is not yet consistently good.
- The new mathematics scheme has not been wholly successful. You are therefore sensibly reviewing and adapting this. Currently, the focus for pupils' learning in mathematics shifts quickly from one aspect to another. This means that pupils do not have time to develop their learning to sufficient depth or apply their skills and knowledge well enough. Pupils' work in books is of variable quality and some pupils do not present their work carefully or with pride. You have wisely enlisted the support of the local authority and a mathematics adviser to support you in securing improvements.
- We also reviewed how well leaders are using the pupil premium funding to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The school's work to support disadvantaged pupils who have emotional and behavioural challenges has been effective. Good-quality help and guidance from trained support staff have led to improvements in pupils' behaviour, well-being, confidence and attendance. Staff have a very good understanding of individual pupils and their emotional vulnerabilities. They ensure that sensitive, bespoke support is targeted to meet these pupils' needs.
- In class, you are making sure that disadvantaged pupils receive more frequent and regular feedback about their learning. Other support from adults in class is shaped around pupils' needs. There have been some improvements to the progress that disadvantaged pupils make. However, you know that there is still more work to do to raise pupils' achievement, particularly those disadvantaged pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Currently, a significant proportion of the pupil premium is allocated to improving mathematics but is not targeted precisely enough on disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have not yet evaluated with sufficient rigour or precision the impact of their work to improve disadvantaged pupils' learning.
- Finally, we reviewed the planning of the curriculum and how this enables pupils to make good progress in a broad range of subjects. You have a distinct rationale and intent for the curriculum, ensuring that the school's 'learning adventures' are interesting and motivating. These plans include memorable experiences, such as special days and topic weeks, which interest and enthuse pupils. Leaders have developed curriculum maps to ensure appropriate subject coverage. They are currently developing their plans so that there is a pathway of progression in pupils' knowledge and skills. You are supporting the newly appointed subject leaders to enable them to play an increasing role in improving teaching and learning. You are also taking steps to ensure that the school's website includes the required statutory information about the curriculum.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics in key stage 2
- they embed the school's newly adopted assessment system so that leaders and governors have a clear understanding and oversight of the progress all groups of pupils are making
- they strengthen the school improvement and pupil premium plans to include clearer, succinct success criteria so that leaders and governors can evaluate the impact of their plans.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Cox  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Together with you and the deputy headteacher, I visited classes in all year groups to look at learning, sample pupils' work in books and talk to pupils about their work. I met with you to discuss the school's self-evaluation and safeguarding arrangements. I met with other leaders and two members of the support team. I met with a group of three governors, including the chair of governors, and held a telephone conversation with the local authority school improvement partner. As well as speaking with pupils during classroom visits, I met with a group of 14 pupils from Years 1 to 6. I reviewed the school's pre-employment checks on the suitability of staff to work with children and other safeguarding information. I also reviewed a wide range of documents, including school policies, pupil premium spending plans, the school development plan and documents relating to governance. I considered the views of parents through the 122 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as parents' written comments. I took into account the responses from the 16 members of staff who completed the Ofsted staff questionnaire. I also met parents on the playground at the start of the school day.