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Mr Robert Gargan
Headteacher
St Mary Immaculate Catholic Primary School
Wathen Road
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Dear Mr Gargan

Short inspection of St Mary Immaculate Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 March 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 January 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since the last inspection, you have introduced a number of changes to the curriculum, which are securing improvements to teaching and pupils' outcomes.

You, along with your leadership team, aim to ensure that every pupil is valued and supported throughout their time at St Mary Immaculate Catholic School. Leaders are determined to provide the highest quality of support and education for pupils through their thorough knowledge of each pupil. Parents and carers say that teachers always 'go the extra mile' to make sure that pupils are well taught and enjoy themselves, and they appreciate the way staff ensure that 'the school is warm and caring'.

You have a team of very committed governors who have a range of expertise and skills. They know the school very well and offer a healthy balance of challenge and support to you and your team. You and your leadership team aim to create 'successful, confident and caring' learners. Pupils benefit from a rich curriculum, including outdoor learning, music and sport.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors found that leadership roles in early years were not clear. You have addressed this by ensuring there is a team approach, so all leaders check all areas of the school. You have increased opportunities for children to develop their writing in Nursery and Reception, so that more children achieve the expected standard and a greater proportion of children are well prepared

for the start of key stage 1.

You place great value on reading for pleasure and pupils readily demonstrate their strong skills of inference and deduction in their work across the school curriculum. Pupils' books show their developing vocabulary. They use increased variation in sentence structure and have an improving grammatical awareness. You have rightly focused on 'connecting the reading and writing' so pupils are able to write at length using their reading knowledge and understanding to produce cohesive pieces of writing.

Pupils' behaviour, their attitudes to learning and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are also clear strengths of the school. Pupils are confident, articulate and enthusiastic learners. They are focused and attentive in lessons and their conduct around school is good. The school strongly promotes British values, especially through the curriculum and the warm and caring Christian ethos.

Safeguarding is effective.

The single central record meets requirements. Recording systems are in place for the recruitment of staff. Governors assure themselves that the necessary checks have been made and documents are in order. All staff and governors receive regular child protection training. You regularly use case studies with staff to exemplify good practice.

Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Most pupils have good attendance. However, there is a very small proportion of pupils who do not attend regularly. You are successfully working with the families to reduce the number of absences. Bullying is rare, and it is dealt with effectively. Pupils learn about using the internet safely and how to avoid the potential dangers of social media sites.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have a good understanding of the quality of pupils' work. You use a variety of strategies to support pupils to enable them to attain and progress well, including through academic and social and emotional support. The school monitors individual pupils' progress, and the results show that there are no significant differences between the achievement of groups of pupils across school. You hold progress meetings regularly. These ensure leaders and teaching staff are rigorous in their monitoring of teaching and learning.
- The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils well. It develops key skills across the curriculum, such as literacy and numeracy. As well as this, it offers rich experiences and provides frequent opportunities for trips. Pupils have visited Warwick Castle and a gurdwara, and the school takes pupils on residential visits. Pupils benefit from outdoor learning, music and sport also.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good. Leaders know these pupils well, track achievements closely and support teachers and teaching assistants to improve their effectiveness. A whole-school

provision map is in place which identifies and supports all pupils who are falling behind. You have also developed good partnerships with external agencies.

- Children in early years continue to make good overall progress from their starting points in almost all areas of learning. However, you have rightly recognised that in order to increase the number of children who are attaining a good level of development, writing is a priority for early years. Although the school is developing more opportunities for children to write independently, staff do not always give enough guidance to children on how to use their phonic knowledge in their writing.
- Pupils' progress in key stage 1 and key stage 2 is good in all subjects. They enjoy reading for pleasure and have strong skills of inference and deduction. Pupils' books show that because of this strong practice, their vocabulary is being extended. Pupils use increased variation in sentence structure and have an improving grammatical awareness. However, pupils sometimes do not transfer these technical skills when they write at length. You have rightly focused on 'connecting the reading and writing' so that pupils are able to write using their knowledge and understanding to produce cohesive pieces of writing.
- In mathematics, workbooks show that the basic skills to develop fluency are strong. Pupils undertake activities across the curriculum that allow them to understand mathematics in context. For example, they have drawn up recipes for pancakes and used graphs and coordinates in science and geography. However, leaders believe pupils' understanding of mathematical language in some cases is preventing them from using their well-developed basic skills when tackling problem-solving and reasoning questions. Books show evidence of using and applying mathematics, but these features are not fully embedded across all year groups. There is an ongoing priority for pupils to be exposed to a greater range of mathematical language and to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils develop their writing skills further, with a focus on cohesion in longer pieces of writing
- the teaching of reasoning and problem solving in mathematics enables pupils to tackle such questions with greater confidence.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Archdiocese of Birmingham, the regional schools commissioner and the

director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Khalid Din
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your senior leaders, and spoke with parents and members of the governing body, including the chair. I spoke with pupils informally at lunchtime and met with a group of four pupils. I heard them read and discussed the school's work. I observed teaching in all classes, where I looked at pupils' work to consider the quality of learning over time.

I reviewed the school's documents about safeguarding, including the single central record, attendance information and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan. I spoke with 11 parents on the playground and I considered 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.