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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Laura White
Headteacher
St Anselm's Catholic Primary School
Littlebrook Manor Way
Temple Hill
Dartford
Kent
DA1 5EA

Dear Mrs White

Short inspection of St Anselm's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 June 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 second short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in March 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Leaders have taken action to address the next steps identified at the last inspection. New initiatives in the teaching of reading are having a particularly positive impact on pupils' progress and enjoyment of reading. These improvements are also strengthening pupils' writing skills. Attainment and rates of progress in reading and writing, as well as mathematics, have steadily improved since the last inspection and are at above-national levels. The rates of progress of disadvantaged pupils are also strong.

Actions to address outcomes in the wider curriculum, beyond English and mathematics, have not yet had the desired effect. Following your analysis and evaluation of pupils' progress in subjects such as history and geography, you have introduced a new approach to planning the curriculum. This is at an early stage of development. Leaders carefully and accurately monitor and evaluate the impact of new initiatives on pupils' learning. They provide clear and realistic objectives for further improvement.

Parents speak very highly of the school and are delighted with the progress their children make. Parents who spoke to me used words such as 'excellent', 'well-organised' and 'brilliant' to describe the school. They say their children are happy at school and make good progress. One parent said that staff have a 'personal

connection' with each pupil. Relationships between adults and pupils at school are strong. Another parent said, '[This is an] absolutely fantastic school with great teachers; my daughter is in Year 1 and is flying ahead with her education.' All the parents who responded to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, would recommend the school.

There have been changes in the leadership of the school since the last inspection. A new deputy headteacher has recently joined the school and an assistant headteacher was appointed last September. The leadership team has driven forward a number of new initiatives in the design and implementation of the curriculum. Among these an emphasis has been placed on the development of personal skills and the health and well-being of pupils, underpinning successful learning and outcomes. Personal skills of leadership, organisation, resilience, initiative and communication are actively promoted throughout the school to enhance pupils' ability to achieve academically, but also to prepare them for life beyond school. Leaders are aware of the social and emotional pressures young people face, developing the personal, social, health and economic education curriculum to support pupils' mental health and emotional well-being. Well-qualified staff, who have the right experience to support this work, have been recruited.

Despite many changes of staff, and vacancies in the governing body, the leadership of the school remains strong. It is driven by well-articulated Christian values and a clear vision. The leadership team accurately evaluates the quality of teaching and maintains a sharp focus on the progress of pupils. Governors similarly monitor the work of the school. They challenge leaders appropriately, based on the information presented to them and their own knowledge of the school. They visit the school regularly and know it well, though some governors are relatively new to their role.

Pupils are confident, well mannered and articulate. They develop maturity and a sense of responsibility from an early age. Pupils are polite and welcoming towards visitors. They are enthusiastic about school and enjoy learning. Pupils are motivated and behave well, both during lessons and throughout the school day. They say they sometimes get too excited by new activities, but that teachers know how to calm them down. Pupils are particularly committed to the school's 'pride' values, which underpin their positive behaviour. They know these values well and can describe their meaning in detail. They say they are free from bullying and they like the use of 'worry eaters', where they can post their worries confidentially and know that an adult will provide support. Pupils trust school staff and know they have someone to talk to if they have a need.

Safeguarding is effective.

Recruitment and vetting checks for new members of staff are carried out meticulously and are fully completed before they take up their appointments. The single central record of these checks is well maintained, thorough and fully compliant with statutory requirements. The designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) are regularly trained and actively keep themselves up to date with developments in safeguarding. They are well placed to provide training for their colleagues and governors. All staff are routinely

and regularly provided with training to ensure that they fully understand their responsibilities and the school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. Staff know the signs that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm and act promptly if they have a concern, using the school's referral system. DSLs respond swiftly to such concerns and seek advice appropriately from the local authority's children's services when necessary. They maintain well-organised records of referrals and actions taken to support vulnerable pupils, following them up promptly. Pupils feel safe at school and know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, both within school and beyond. They have also been taught how to keep themselves safe on the internet.

Inspection findings

- The school continues to provide a good quality of education. Teaching is stimulating and engaging, and, in key stage 2 particularly, it is often highly effective. Pupils enjoy their learning and are committed to doing well. They are very well motivated and behave exceptionally well during lessons and throughout the school day.
- In Reception, learning is well supported by adults, who skilfully follow children's interests, providing appropriate resources to deepen learning. For example, a group of children were fascinated by the insects in the outside area, using magnifiers and information sheets to enable them to find out more. The children sustained their hunt for insects and compared their different attributes. Adults make effective use of questioning to support activities, and model the use of vocabulary to extend children's communication skills. For example, during role play at 'the hairdresser's', children learned from the sorts of conversations hairdressers have with their customers, as a result of adult support. These teaching strategies enrich the children's play and extend their learning.
- Current pupils' rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics are strong. In 2018 in key stage 2, rates of progress were above average in reading and writing, and well above average in mathematics. Attainment was also above average, with a significant proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards. In key stage 1, rates of progress are also good. In 2018 outcomes at the end of key stage 1 were above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils read confidently and well. At the end of key stage 1, pupils are able to read independently and fluently with understanding. By the end of key stage 2, pupils read widely, have a good knowledge of different genres, and express their preferences for particular authors. Teachers ensure that pupils read more challenging books in addition to following the authors who are popular among children. One Year 6 pupil read an anthology of African American speeches to me with real expression and appreciation for the genre. Pupils are inspired by their reading and they see it also as an important leisure activity. While pupils make strong progress in mathematics, some most-able pupils are not moved on as quickly as they could be in key stage 1.
- New initiatives in the teaching of English are having a strong impact in developing pupils' reading and writing skills, particularly in key stage 2. Teachers make skilful use of high-quality literature to teach comprehension and inference skills. In turn,

teachers support pupils in using this learning to develop their writing.

- Pupils know what they are aiming to improve and how well they are improving their skills as writers. They write for effect and make use of a range of techniques to engage the reader, drawing on the craft of famous authors. By the end of key stage 2 pupils are achieving some quite sophisticated pieces of writing. They are confident and articulate in describing their work, for example in terms of how they evoke emotion. A small number of pupils do not develop these skills as far as they could, and do not become as confident as they could be in knowing how to improve their work. Most pupils enjoy writing and have a well-developed technical knowledge.
- Teachers show passion in their teaching and have high levels of subject knowledge. This enables them to engage pupils and ask challenging and probing questions to deepen pupils' thinking.
- Since September the new approach to teaching subjects beyond English and mathematics has been having a positive impact on pupils' learning in subjects such as history and geography, but is at an early stage of development. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in science are well developed over time, but not so well developed in subjects such as geography, history and art. For example, pupils have been introduced to maps, but their knowledge and use of maps has not yet been sufficiently developed as they move up through the school. The wider curriculum is organised into topics, and pupils enjoy these, achieving some good-quality outcomes. These are well supported by homework that enables pupils to develop specific interests in greater depth.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching of subjects in the wider curriculum, beyond English and mathematics, builds pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding more systematically over time, so that they make secure progress and have opportunities to achieve the highest standards in these subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Wibroe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior teacher and parent support adviser (PSA). The headteacher and PSA are two of the school's designated safeguarding leads. I also met with a group of governors, including the chair. The local authority's school improvement adviser working with the school spoke to me by telephone. I held discussions with parents at the beginning of the school day. Thirty-one responses to Parent View, Ofsted's parent survey, and 30 free-text responses were reviewed. Together with headteacher and deputy headteacher, I observed learning in lessons, and reviewed pupils' learning over time in their books. Pupils' attainment and rates of progress were taken into consideration. Pupils were spoken to in lessons and on the playground. A conversation with a group of pupils from across the school was held during the afternoon. Seventy-one responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 26 responses to its staff survey were reviewed. I considered a range of school documentation, including its self-evaluation, development plan, a range of policies, and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection.