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7 February 2020

John Barrett  
St Philip's RC Primary School  
Cavendish Road  
Salford  
Greater Manchester  
M7 4WP

Dear John Barrett

### **No formal designation inspection of St Philip's RC Primary School**

Following my visit with Julie Brown, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 21–22 January 2020, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about aspects of the quality of education.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, we scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding. We also scrutinised the school's curriculum policy, plans and schemes of work, attendance records and external reviews of the school.

We spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. We also spoke with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, the headteacher, senior leaders and members of staff. We considered the 138 responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View.

We looked in depth at reading, mathematics, physical education and history. This entailed: discussions with subject leaders; visits to lessons; looking at examples of children's work; discussions with teachers; discussions with pupils; and listening to pupils read.

Having considered the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:  
The school continues to be outstanding and safeguarding is effective.

## Context

St Philip's Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. There has been a significant increase in the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language since the last inspection. The proportion is now well above the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is broadly in line with the national average. Pupil mobility is low. The current headteacher was assistant headteacher at the time of the last inspection. He has established a new leadership team and recruited the majority of the current teaching staff. There has been significant investment to improve the school building, including making the building accessible.

The inspection took place due to concerns about the decline in pupils' progress in reading and mathematics in key stage 2 in 2018. Despite there being relevant reasons for the decline, leaders acted quickly to address this. They made improvements to the reading and mathematics curriculum. As a result, in 2019, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average.

Leadership and management are strong at St Philip's. The headteacher has high expectations for himself, his staff and the pupils. He has made sure that all leaders have excellent subject knowledge in the areas that they lead. All staff are highly ambitious for their pupils. As a result, pupils try to be the best that they can be and achieve well. Governors have high expectations of school leaders. They know what is going on in the school because they ask questions and they are well informed.

The quality of education is exceptional. The curriculum is expertly designed. Leaders have spent many years improving the curriculum in all subjects. Curriculum plans are clear about what pupils will learn in every year. Leaders have made sure that teachers know how to teach each subject well. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use this, and information of what pupils already know and can do, to plan interesting learning activities. This makes sure that pupils' knowledge builds up well over time. Pupils also make links between the subjects that they learn. The curriculum is enhanced through trips, visits and events. This makes pupils' learning memorable and relevant.

Teachers have an excellent understanding of how to support pupils with SEND. The support that these pupils receive is well planned. The highly inclusive ethos in the school ensures that pupils with SEND achieve to the best of their abilities.

Leaders have made sure that reading has a high priority across the school. Leaders and staff teach pupils to read quickly. This starts as soon as children start in Nursery. The teaching of phonics is impressive. Books that pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they are learning. Pupils' progress in phonics is regularly checked. Immediate support is put in place if pupils need to catch up. As a

result, the proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been consistently above the national average for several years. Across the school, books and print are everywhere. Pupils love reading. They speak confidently about a range of authors and why they like them.

Pupils are rightly proud of their school. They told inspectors that they 'value their education'. Pupils feel lucky to learn so many different subjects and in so many exciting ways. As one pupil summed up: 'you are never bored at St Philip's'.

Pupils enjoy the roles and responsibilities that they hold across the school, from prefects to being on the mission team. Pupils are excellent ambassadors for their school. They enjoy representing their school in many different tournaments. Their strong skills in different sports have led to many successes.

Pupils' learning goes beyond the academic curriculum. They enjoy learning about what it means to be a good citizen. Pupils really do care about others. They have a deep sense of responsibility. Pupils want to make the world a better place to live. They raise money for others less fortunate in their community and around the world. Pupils told us about the importance of making water clean for children in Africa.

Pupils are caring, respectful and tolerant. Their excellent attitudes to learning and impeccable behaviour stand out in this highly regarded and oversubscribed school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Salford, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Salford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Barlow

**Her Majesty's Inspector**