

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



13 March 2017

Miss Rita McLoughlin
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
Lacock Road
Corsham
Wiltshire
SN13 9HS

Dear Miss McLoughlin

Short inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 2 March 2017, 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 2013.

This school continues to be good.

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

Your leadership has created a school that is very inclusive and works well with the local community. The welcoming atmosphere encourages parents to visit and this has proved beneficial with the diversity of the population in the nearby town. As one parent noted, 'The environment is caring and supportive and staff engaged and dedicated.'

Despite some difficult staffing issues within recent times, you have steered the school expertly so that the impact on pupil outcomes has been minimal. You have a governing body that provides good support and challenge and this has been very helpful to you.

Since the last inspection, you have provided better capacity within leadership by creating teams of teachers who innovate and evaluate teaching within English, mathematics and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This has ensured that successful improvements have been made in these areas.

You have encouraged pupils to improve their presentation by developing their handwriting and reward them with a pen licence when they become proficient. This has been very effective in motivating pupils to care about their handwriting and legibility of work. Improvements have been made in writing for different purposes but you know that there is still more to do to make sure pupils are responding to

the requirements for writing at greater depth in the new curriculum.

The training provided for both teachers and teaching assistants has meant that they are asking more probing questions of pupils. Pupils are expected to be more insightful in their responses. This is helping pupils to have more in depth knowledge across a range of subjects. It has been beneficial to the most able and the most able disadvantaged, in particular.

The new deputy headteacher, who was appointed in September 2016, has introduced a system which ensures that the most able pupils are challenged by more taxing tasks while the lower-ability pupils are provided with well-paced activities that better suit their needs. The pupils respond well to the different aspects of learning and appreciate how they are progressing as they work their way through the tasks. As a result, individual pupils are making more rapid progress from their different starting points.

Safeguarding is effective.

Governors and the leadership team have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are high quality and detailed. Staff are trained well on how to keep pupils safe from abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. The good safeguarding culture enables staff to work sensitively with parents and external agencies to monitor and support the more vulnerable pupils.

Inspection findings

- An area we agreed to look at during the inspection was the improvements in the core subjects of English and mathematics. You have focused on spelling from the phonics teaching in the foundation stage to the spelling rules needed in Year 6 so that pupils are more successful in the end-of-year tests at key stage 2. This, alongside the carefully planned stages in developing punctuation and grammar, is helping pupils improve their writing in technical ways. You are aware that further progress is needed for pupils to secure the best possible outcomes.
- Pupils are confident and skilled in their arithmetic, which is helping them succeed in their work on algebra and fractions. You have devised a calculation policy which supports pupils processing multi-step and more complex mathematical problems at key stage 2. You acknowledge that this needs to be embedded fully so that more of the middle ability and most-able pupils succeed in the higher level of mathematical reasoning. Pupils at key stage 1 are less secure in applying their mathematics to solve problems, so further work is necessary here, too.
- Another area we explored was the outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The special educational needs coordinator has raised colleagues' awareness of these pupils to ensure that staff are more receptive to their needs. Teachers and teaching assistants are presented with information that explains how each of these pupils learns, and what they find difficult or emotionally, physically or intellectually challenging. Teachers understand that they must adapt their practice for these pupils to succeed. The raised profile of these pupils ensures that they make better progress because the

barriers to their learning are being removed.

- Finally, we discussed the dip in overall attendance of pupils and for some groups. To improve this, you have worked with members of the local community to explain the importance of education and the devastating impact that non-attendance can have on pupils' progress. Consequently, overall attendance is above the national average as is the attendance of pupils with English as an additional language. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved but is not yet on a par with the national average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils use the grammatical and technical aspects of writing learned when writing for different purposes
- the most able and middle ability pupils achieve their full potential and gain results at a high standard in mathematics
- the attendance of disadvantaged pupils improves so that it is at least in line with the national average for all pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Kathy Maddocks
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, middle leaders, the vice-chair of the governing body and another governor, the school improvement adviser, staff and pupils. I visited lessons for all classes in the school. I looked at the quality of the work in pupils' exercise books. I considered documentary evidence relating to the impact of the school's work, including safeguarding. I took into account 56 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and 43 comments written by parents, plus the 27 responses from staff and the 97 pupil responses to the Ofsted online survey.