

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



12 February 2018

Mrs Mary Cobbold
Headteacher
All Saints Roman Catholic Primary School
Green Lane East
Thirsk
North Yorkshire
YO7 1NB

Dear Mrs Cobbold

Short inspection of All Saints Roman Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 February 2018, 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 June 2014.

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.**

The previous inspection report challenged the school to develop the skills of middle leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. Subsequently, middle leaders' effectiveness has improved and pupils' positive achievements across subjects have been sustained over time. The proportions of pupils reaching the expected standards in phonics, reading, writing and mathematics in 2017, for example, were above national averages in both key stages 1 and 2.

There has been a great deal of turbulence in staffing recently. Most teaching staff and leaders, including yourself, are new to post. You have quickly created a pleasant, positive atmosphere across the school. Staff feel that leaders and governors value their efforts. All adults share an appropriately aspirational vision for improvement. Information that you shared with me, however, indicates that leaders new to role are not yet monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across subjects rigorously. Rates of progress for current pupils in reading, writing and science, in particular, are too variable across year groups. In addition, you have identified that leaders are not yet tracking and assessing pupils' progress in foundation subjects, such as history and geography, closely or accurately enough.

Over time, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development in the early years has remained slightly above the national average. Nevertheless, since taking up post in January 2018, you have accurately identified teaching and learning in the early years as a priority area for improvement. Most children enter school with typical skills but progress for current children is inconsistent. Staff do not offer children sufficient challenge in developing the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Too often, low-level disruption or overly boisterous play interrupts teaching and learning.

You have also correctly identified reading as a priority area for improvement. You have revamped the library, improved the quality of displays to better promote literacy and made clear your expectations that all pupils must read frequently with adults. School records and work in pupils' books, however, demonstrate that current pupils make variable progress from their different starting points in reading. Not all pupils read frequently with adults in school. Staff do not maintain or check records carefully to make sure that pupils are reading a wide range of good-quality books and texts that are well-matched to pupils' needs and interests.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You are rightly emphatic about the importance of protecting pupils in your care. You took swift action to improve the cleanliness and appearance of the school site, making sure that any risks to health or safety were minimised. You also examined, updated and shared policies relating to the protection or care of pupils promptly. You made sure that all staff new to school had the required training and information needed to fulfil their duties. Staff, therefore, know how and to whom they should report any concerns that they may have.

Pupils enjoy school and the vast majority have good attendance. All parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are confident that their children are safe, happy and make good progress in their learning. Pupils feel safe and well looked after by staff. They can talk knowledgeably about road and fire safety. While pupils can explain what constitutes bullying, they are confident that staff will resolve any rare issues that may arise. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm, friendly and also professional. Pupils feel assured that they have someone in school to talk to if they have worries.

Governors ask increasingly challenging questions of leaders about pupils' behaviour, attendance and well-being. Teachers' positive behaviour management skills contribute effectively to key stages 1 and 2 pupils' good conduct in and around school. Pupils are unfailingly polite, respectful and cheerful. The kind, caring attitudes of older pupils towards their younger peers is indicative of pupils' tolerance and regard for others. Staff offer positive role models in this regard.

Some records documenting issues of behaviour, attendance or other matters of concern, however, are lacking in consistency and detail. For example, prior to inspection, some minor details documenting the checks made on the suitability of

staff working with pupils were incomplete. At times, the chronology of welfare or behaviour incidents is unclear. Leaders do not analyse records and information thoroughly to see if particular issues recur or to identify patterns. Leaders' ability to spot and tackle issues, swiftly, is therefore hindered. You and governors recognise this and have already taken steps to put in place whole-school systems that are more thorough.

Inspection findings

- New subject leaders are bringing fresh enthusiasm as well as strengths in subject knowledge to the school. Some are beginning to examine teachers' planning and look at the work in pupils' books to get a feel for the strengths and weaknesses within their areas of responsibility. Not all leaders, however, have regular opportunities to monitor or contribute to the quality of teaching and learning across year groups. Pupils' rates of progress in science, reading and writing, in particular, are not monitored or evaluated carefully enough. In addition, current assessment systems do not capture pupils' achievement across subjects such as history or geography accurately.
- Children in the early years are happy and have fun across the day. There are lots of smiles and lively, good-natured interactions between peers. Staff display gentle, caring attitudes towards children. Too often, however, low-level disruption interrupts teaching and learning, and sometimes play is overly boisterous. Some areas of provision and learning tasks do not offer sufficient challenge. Children tackle reading, writing and mathematics work they already know and can do. Because children's interests are not captured and their needs are not met effectively, restless and distracted behaviours ensue. Such issues are impeding some children's progress currently.
- Leaders, governors and staff have safeguarding as standing agenda items in their regular meetings. All staff take pupils' safety, well-being, behaviour and attendance seriously. Serious incidents are extremely rare. Pupils, staff and parents agree that their children are safe at All Saints. Nonetheless, at times school records lack detail, information and a clear chronology. This has hampered leaders' ability to spot or tackle any patterns, trends or specific issues rapidly. Recognising these points, you are currently implementing more rigorous record-keeping systems. You have challenged all staff to include better detail, sufficient information and a clear chronology in logs and documents.
- Pupils say they enjoy reading and read frequently with adults at home. They appreciate the improved library environment and feel confident that they will find books and texts in school that they can enjoy. Some pupils read regularly with adults in school and some teachers use assessment effectively to match pupils' reading tasks and materials accurately to needs and interests. These positive practices, however, are not consistent across year groups. Consequently, not all pupils are currently making the progress in reading that staff should expect.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders track and monitor the quality of teaching and learning closely across the wider curriculum, evaluating pupils' progress in reading, writing and science accurately and more meticulously
- staff in the early years address issues of disruption and offer children greater challenge in their work and learning in reading, writing and mathematics
- documentation pertaining to pupils' behaviour and welfare is detailed, well maintained and examined regularly
- all pupils regularly read books and texts that are well-matched to their needs and interests with adults in school.

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

Yours sincerely

Fiona Manuel
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, subject leaders and the head of school. You and I jointly observed teaching, learning and assessment in all classes. I scrutinised work in pupils' books, spoke with pupils from each key stage and considered the responses by 21 pupils to Ofsted's online questionnaire. I reviewed school documentation and information, including policies, assessment information, monitoring files and your school improvement plans. I met with governors, including the chair of the governing body and representatives from the local authority and the Diocese of Middlesbrough. I took account of 13 free-text comments and 13 responses by parents to Parent View. Staff did not complete Ofsted's online questionnaire. However, I spoke with individual members of staff informally and a group of staff formally during the inspection and considered their views.