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12 October 2018

Mrs Caroline Quinn
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Quinn

Short inspection of All Souls Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 2 October 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 November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

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

There have been significant changes to staffing and to the governing body since the previous inspection. You have managed these changes successfully and ensured that there has been no disruption to pupils' learning. Some changes have occurred because you identified and addressed weaknesses in teaching. This is because you are determined and resolute that all pupils will receive the very highest quality of education. Training and support have been provided for all staff and a new middle leadership team has been created to help raise standards even further.

You have created a united and supportive team. As a result, staff morale is high. All staff who responded to the inspection survey said that they were proud to work at All Souls Catholic Primary. Parents' views are equally positive. Of the responses received, all parents said that their children were happy and safe at school and almost all would recommend the school to other parents. One comment made summed up the views of many, 'I cannot praise the staff enough. My children love school and are very happy. Any concerns, be it minor or major, are very well dealt with.'

Pupils enjoy the wide range and full programme of extra-curricular activities and clubs offered. This adds to pupils' creative, cultural and social development as well

as encouraging them to develop musical and sporting talents. Pupils are proud of their school and describe it as 'friendly and welcoming'. New arrivals, including those who speak English as an additional language, are quickly included and accepted by all staff and pupils. Recognising the very high level of inclusivity and opportunities provided, one pupil stated, 'This school has changed my life.'

You have successfully maintained the school's strengths and addressed most of the issues presented in the previous inspection report. An accurate and robust assessment system, designed by the deputy headteacher, provides detailed information about how well pupils are achieving. Regular discussions between leaders and teachers enable additional support to be provided to ensure that pupils make good progress. However, further development in the use of assessment is needed in the early years to extend children's early knowledge and skills. The teaching of writing, including the use of punctuation, grammar and spelling, also requires attention across the school to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress and a greater proportion achieve at the higher levels.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have created a strong culture for safeguarding pupils. Necessary training and guidance have been provided to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in protecting pupils from harm. High levels of vigilance and excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure that any concerns are picked up and reported appropriately. The change to a new electronic recording system has improved the tracking of concerns raised and chronology of actions taken. Risk assessments are carried out to detect and avoid potential dangers during school activities. Safer recruitment checks are robust, and all adults are fully vetted to ensure that they are safe to work with children. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe are highly developed, especially in relation to online safety. This is because this is taught well through lessons, events and workshops for parents. Pupils know how to protect themselves when using social media or the internet. They happily comply with the school's policy on handing in their mobile phones to the school office, because they know that phones distract them from their learning and can cause potential problems. Pupils have trust in adults in school and are confident to report any concerns. As one pupil put it, 'Our teachers are like our parents.' Pupils feel safe in school and parents agree that their children are well cared for.

Inspection findings

- You are highly experienced and have a passion and commitment to improving children's lives. You are well supported by a supportive and well-informed governing body and effective deputy headteacher. Together you have identified clear strengths and areas for improvement. To extend the capacity of leadership within the school, you have recently appointed new phase leaders. Although new to post and still getting to grips with their roles, they clearly demonstrate

potential. They are stepping up to their new responsibilities. Training and support are being provided to assist them in doing their jobs well. These leaders are now involved in compiling this year's school action plan to enhance their contribution to school improvement.

- Over time, children have achieved well in the early years, although there was a significant dip in 2017 results. You explained that this was due to weak teaching. You have now addressed this issue and the proportion of children achieving the early learning goals has now risen again and is in line with the national average. Good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Adults are attentive and provide good levels of support to children. Appropriate resources are provided to help children acquire the early skills necessary for further learning. Regular opportunities are provided for children to practise recording numbers and letters in books. Reading is also taught well from the outset with an effective introduction to phonics.
- The majority of children join Nursery or the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. Good links exist with the onsite private nursery provider. This aids smooth transition into school for children from this setting. All children learn and adapt to routines and settle quickly. Assessment systems are used to capture starting points. Learning journals contain photographic evidence of daily activities, together with teacher comments of what children can do. However, information gathered is not robust and is not used well enough to move children on swiftly by building on what they can already do. Teacher assessments are overly cautious and evidence in children's books shows that children are more capable than initial assessments on entry to the early years would indicate. Consequently, this hinders teachers in moving children on to more challenging work early enough. As a result, the majority of children reach a good level of development at the end of early years, but too few exceed the levels expected.
- In general, pupils make good progress as they move through the school. They present their work neatly and teachers provide regular feedback for pupils so they know how well they are doing. Provisional results for 2018 attainment at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results at the end of key stage 2 have risen consistently over the last three years. However, pupils' progress from key stage 1 to key stage 2 in 2018 was weaker in writing when compared to reading and mathematics, especially for the more able pupils. Progress in writing for current pupils is also inconsistent, as evidenced by the school's own assessments and work in pupils' books.
- Although pupils are able to write in different genres, only a small number are working at greater depth. This is because pupils lack the higher-order skills needed, such as the ability to use paragraphs, more complex punctuation and vocabulary and a greater variety of phrases. Although pupils attain well in the stand-alone end of Year 6 grammar, punctuation and spelling test, they are unable to apply these skills in their independent writing in English or other areas

of the curriculum. Some basic and repeated errors are not picked up by teachers and, consequently, these detract from the quality and coherence of pupils' work. Pupils also lack stamina to write at length. This is because teachers' expectations are too low and they do not provide opportunities to develop pupils' resilience in this area.

- Leaders use the pupil premium funding very effectively. Attainment at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 is at least in line with, or above, other pupils nationally. In-school differences for current disadvantaged pupils and their peers are diminishing. Because of the good support they receive, disadvantaged pupils make similar and, on occasion, stronger progress than their classmates. Leaders ensure eligible pupils benefit from financial support with trips, uniform, extra-curricular activities and transport costs. Due consideration is also given to their academic achievement, with additional teaching support at breakfast club, through individual interventions and with help during lessons. Equal importance is also applied to pupils' personal and mental well-being. Counselling is provided for pupils who need this support to help reduce any barriers to their learning. As a result, these pupils achieve well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that teaching:

- moves children on more swiftly in the early years through more effective use of assessment
- develops pupils' resilience, accuracy of grammar, punctuation and spelling and skill in writing, so that an increasing proportion reach greater depth.

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 Coventry. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Heather Simpson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, members of your leadership team and governing body, and spoke, by telephone, to a representative from the local authority. I discussed the work of the school, including the processes and procedures in place for safeguarding. Together, we observed teaching in several classes, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at the work in their books. I talked to pupils at lunchtime to gather their views about school, to determine whether they felt safe and the typicality of behaviour.

I looked at a range of school documents, including the school's own information about pupils' achievement. I reviewed the school's evaluation of its work, together with different actions plans. I took account of the 63 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the free-text responses from parents. Views of parents who collected their children at the end of the school day were also considered, together with staff views.