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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Ms Adeola Oladejo
Headteacher
St Jude and St Paul's CofE Primary School
10 Kingsbury Road
Islington
London
N1 4AZ

Dear Ms Oladejo

Short inspection of St Jude and St Paul's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 January 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 first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good November 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have managed well the significant turnover in staff that has taken place since your appointment in September 2017. You have shaped a new leadership team with a shared vision for school improvement. Members of the governing body know the school thoroughly and have given you their full support to make the changes needed. Parents say that there is a real sense of community in the school, where all children are known individually and feel valued.

Leaders are working to establish a culture of aspiration and accountability among staff and this is already having an impact on the progress pupils are making. The school is calm and purposeful. Assessments are now much more thorough and are helping teachers to plan lessons which match the needs of all the pupils in their classes more accurately. This has contributed to earlier identification of most-able pupils to improve their progress, which was an action point from the previous inspection. The school was also asked to improve pupils' writing. In national assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2018, pupils achieved well above national averages in the progress they made in writing. This is now a strength of the school. Pupils also made sufficient progress in mathematics to reach broadly average attainment.

The 2018 results showed some weaker outcomes. Year 6 Pupils did less well in reading and Year 1 pupils did not achieve as well as pupils nationally in the phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) screening check. Relatively few pupils achieved the higher or greater depth standard in writing, reading or mathematics. Pupils' attainment in science

was below the national average. Together, we agreed to look actions you have taken so far this year to improve these areas.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Secure systems and processes are in place and, as a result, all staff know how to report any safeguarding concerns. As a team, you follow up any issues carefully and swiftly, working well with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Leaders complete the required checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work in the school. These checks are recorded on the single central record, which is updated and monitored regularly by leaders and governors.

You make sure that all staff have received regular and appropriate safeguarding training that supports their understanding of the current statutory guidance. You remind staff frequently about their duties in safeguarding pupils. There is a rolling programme of staff training in place. This means that all staff are kept fully aware of the risks that pupils may be facing, such as keeping safe online and the dangers of radicalisation. Pupils say that they feel safe in the school. They are confident that you and your staff will keep them safe and respond promptly to any concerns they may have.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to evaluate the impact of your actions to improve pupils' progress in reading. Although progress has improved slightly since 2016, it is still below that found nationally and remains a key priority for the school.
- Leaders have taken a range of actions to improve reading, including the use of external support to ensure that reading is a priority for all teachers.
- The teaching of phonics has been a priority this year. All adults in Reception and Year 1 have received training. Pupils in Year 1 are taught in different groups to target each learning step more precisely. You have also introduced a new reading programme which ensures that every Year 1 pupil has an opportunity to read with an adult every day. This is in its very early stages, so impact cannot be measured. Leaders are monitoring progress regularly. Some inconsistencies in teaching remain but, overall, pupils' knowledge of phonics and early reading is now more secure, showing broadly good progress.
- All pupils now receive reading guidance every day in a variety of ways; reading opportunities are also provided across all areas of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to read at home, including an element of competition. Leaders have invited authors into the school and enrichment weeks have been introduced which are developing a love of reading in your pupils. As a result of this range of actions, the progress pupils are making is improving.
- My next line of enquiry was to look at what action leaders are taking to identify most-able pupils and provide the support and challenge they need to achieve at greater depth in reading and mathematics.

- Leaders' evaluation identified that pupils' arithmetical skills are strong, but that limited understanding of problem-solving and mathematical reasoning was preventing the most able from achieving to their potential. With the support of the local authority and the London Diocesan Board for Schools, leaders have developed teachers' skills to help pupils learn how to reason and solve problems in much more depth. This is providing the challenge that all pupils, particularly the most able, need.
- Observation of teaching and scrutiny of work in books show that teachers have embraced this support and there has been a significant improvement in the way mathematics is being taught. For example, pupils in Year 3, working in pairs, were able to explain their understanding of a complex problem. Pupils' books from across the school show that their mathematical understanding is broadening and there are opportunities for the most able pupils to work at greater depth.
- Similarly, the school's focus on reading is developing pupils' ability to read in greater depth. The most able readers are being identified much earlier through more accurate assessment. Teachers are expected to use this information to provide extension and challenge to secure more-rapid progress. Although this work is still in the early stages, I saw evidence of pupils in classes reading and discussing challenging texts with good understanding.
- My final line of enquiry was to check how carefully leaders nurture the wider curriculum, looking in detail at science.
- You acknowledged that science has not been an area of focus; new leadership of the subject provides an opportunity to raise the quality of teaching and outcomes. Monitoring of the science curriculum and pupils' work in science are now seen to be a priority. In most classes, pupils' science books have little writing, with heavy reliance on standardised worksheets. These did not provide any challenge for the most able pupils. This was also the case for work in topic books. The exception was in Year 6, where work in science and other subjects is of a consistently high standard. We agreed that this should provide a model for all teachers.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on current actions to raise standards more rapidly in reading across the school, particularly for the most able pupils
- pupils' progress across the wider curriculum, particularly in science, matches that in English and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Ladipo
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I held meetings with you, senior leaders and members of the governing body to discuss the school's self-evaluation and the actions taken to improve the quality of education provided. I also spoke with the school improvement partner from the local authority and the Diocese of London. I visited all classrooms with a school leader and observed and talked to pupils as they were learning. I met with middle leaders who have responsibility for English, mathematics and science. I looked at examples of pupils' work across all subjects to evaluate pupils' outcomes over time and across the curriculum. I reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation and the single central record of vetting checks on staff. I considered the views of parents through the 14 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View. I also considered five responses from staff to the Ofsted surveys.