

25 July 2019

Mrs Michelle Lunney
Headteacher
St Osmund's Catholic Primary School
Church Road
Barnes
London
SW13 9HQ

Dear Mrs Lunney

Short inspection of St Osmund's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 July 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 your school was judged to be good in January 2016.

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 recently been appointed as headteacher. This follows a certain amount of turbulence in leadership at the school. You have strived to maintain the school ethos, throughout this time, based on Christian values.

Recent outcomes in writing, at the end of key stage 2, were less consistent than in reading and mathematics. Current pupils are better prepared for writing because leaders have introduced new approaches to the way pupils learn to write. Leaders including governors recognise that the bulge classes have had both positive and negative implications for the school. Next year's Reception class is oversubscribed, and some siblings cannot get into the school.

You are supported well by the governors, and you meet regularly. Governors have chosen an experienced leader to steady the leadership and management of the school following a period of instability. Highly skilled governors support leaders to deliver their best. They know the school extremely well and use this knowledge to challenge leaders to improve and maintain strong outcomes for all pupils.

Governors want to restore parental confidence in their ability to provide school leadership. A recent letter, from the chair of governors, to parents has set the appropriate tone for the future. Governors have attended recent class representative meetings to listen to parents and they gauge parental feelings through questionnaires. Parents expressed their opinions and concerns to me on recent changes in school leadership. The overwhelming majority of parents are

supportive of the leadership team and understand that governors have attempted to address their concerns and keep lines of communication open.

Pupils told me how much they are looking forward to a forthcoming 'Space Day' when they will be celebrating the Apollo moon landings and broadening their science knowledge. They also told me those areas that they considered need improving at the school. Leaders have pre-empted some of their suggestions. New outdoor equipment has been ordered and it is intended that the new Reception class will have access to more versatile and stimulating apparatus. You also have plans in place to improve the quality of the computing curriculum by updating computer equipment. Pupils told me that the school has helped them read more and that they value the improvements in their reading. For example, pupils moved to chapter books in Year 2, and they told me that this was due to the school making them read more.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders, including governors have the highest regard for safeguarding. Frequent visits by safeguarding governors ensure that effective systems are in place to manage safeguarding. Leaders receive specialist training in safer recruitment. They use these skills to ensure that they appoint appropriate members of staff. New staff receive timely safeguarding training and all staff receive regular safeguarding updates and questionnaires. Leaders respond appropriately to parental concerns and issues and closely follow school policies to ensure the safety of all members of the school community.

Pupils receive accurate and up-to-date information on keeping themselves safe. Pupils told me that they appreciate this advice. Social media issues between pupils do arise and leaders act quickly to avoid them escalating. Leaders arranged for experts to speak to and advise pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils told me how they are better prepared for secondary school because they have been informed of what to expect and how to deal with social media issues.

Inspection findings

- At our initial meeting we agreed on three lines of enquiry. The first focused on leadership and management at the school. This was chosen because recently leadership has been unsettled.
- Leaders, including governors, recognise that ensuring stability in leadership is an important part of their work. They told me that a stable leadership team can best move the school forward in its improvement priorities. Staff morale is high, despite recent instability in leadership, and staff show the dedication and commitment needed to drive school improvement.
- Governors have reacted quickly to ensure stability in leadership at the school. They have appointed you because they value your experience, having served as acting headteacher previously at the school. Plans are in place to expand the leadership team so that roles and responsibilities are shared. Some devolvement

of responsibilities has been made, including the oversight of assessment and the curriculum. Other appointments are planned but have not yet been made.

- Leaders readily seek and take on advice. You appreciate both the formal and informal support that has been put in place to help you in your role. Formal support includes advice and training through the diocese and your school improvement partner. However, leaders also appreciate the advice of their colleagues from local schools and use this to help direct their work.
- The second line of enquiry centred on pupils' progress in writing at key stage 2. This was chosen because, while pupil performance in writing in 2018 was not below national averages, it was below that of other core subjects at the school.
- The introduction of a new reading programme has led to high pupil engagement and given pupils a focus on their reading and writing. This was observed in classrooms where all pupils were involved in their writing and took pride in their presentation. Responses to teachers' reflective marking is quick and apt, for example a pupil responded to 'take extra care with commas' with 'ok, thank you'. Pupils told me how much they value the support of their teachers.
- Writers choose the type of writing to match their audience. For example, pupils wrote an article for 'religion today' (a fictional newspaper), using references from the bible. In their science books, when studying the circulatory system, pupils wrote a report on the functions of the heart with an emphasis on teenagers in secondary school and the dangers of smoking. Cross-curricular activities included pupils studying ancient Greece and cross-referencing that with mathematics and philosophy. Pupils learned about Pythagoras' theorem because of their research into ancient Greece.
- Pupils, across the school, can pronounce most words that their peers nationally might be expected to pronounce, but are not always aware of their meaning. The most accomplished readers have a wide vocabulary that extends into other English-speaking vocabularies. For example, pupils told me some of the subtle differences between British-English and American-English, when discussing the spelling of 'realize'. Current pupils have made strong progress in their writing, which is now in line with reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.
- The third line of enquiry was based on attendance. This was chosen because absence rates, in the previous school year, had been higher than those found nationally.
- Despite having been in post a relatively short time, you have ensured that attendance is a high priority at the school. You frequently meet parents and carers to discuss attendance issues. This has had a positive impact on attendance rates and current levels are above those found nationally. The local authority has, similarly, focused on attendance issues and is preparing to issue fines to those families who take term-time holidays.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- changes in leadership lead to a stable management structure that continues to have the well-being of all members of the school community at its heart
- recent improvements in pupils' progress in writing, within key stage 2, are sustained.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Archdiocese of Southwark, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Richmond upon Thames. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jason Hughes
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I looked at a range of pupils' work, together with middle and senior leaders. I met with governors, including the chair of governors, and the school improvement partner. I also spoke to a representative from the diocese on the telephone. Leaders accompanied me on visits to lessons, where we observed teaching and learning, spoke with pupils and looked at their work. I examined a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, including the single central record of staff checks.

I scrutinised Ofsted's online survey for parents (90 responses) and associated commentary (75 comments), as well as the staff survey (14 responses). There were no responses to the pupil survey. I examined the school's website, policies and reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I also considered the school's evaluation of how well it is doing, its improvement priorities and assessment information for current pupils.