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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mr Ruslan Protsiv
Headteacher
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
Longfield Avenue
London
E17 7DP

Dear Mr Protsiv

Short inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 June 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 November 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school is improving year on year, as can be seen in the pupils' positive outcomes over time. For example, attainment at the end of the early years has risen year on year for the last four years. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development was above the national figure in 2016. In addition, pupils make particularly strong progress from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6.

The senior leadership team and governors are clear about what remains to be done to improve the school further. There is a relentless drive to improve teaching and learning to ensure that it is of the highest quality across the school. Teachers respond positively to the advice that they have been given. Staff work well as a team to ensure that pupils have the same quality of provision across each year group.

Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and use praise well to encourage them in their work. Teachers match work well to the pupils' differing needs most of the time, especially in literacy and numeracy. In science, pupils have greater opportunities to carry out investigations than in the past. However, teachers do not consistently expect pupils to make use of their scientific skills when explaining their thinking. Consequently, pupils do not always show a depth of knowledge and understanding when they write about their learning.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted strongly. Pupils enjoy school and are polite and keen to take responsibility. For example, in the reception year, children are quick to help tidy the classrooms. Across the school, pupils are good at helping each other with their learning. Pupils show their respect for British values and other cultures in their thoughtful work in topics such as 'friendship' and their booklets about 'The Five Pillars of Islam'.

The curriculum has improved since the last inspection because it has been reviewed and developed. It is now providing a wealth of interesting activities covering various topics. Several of your middle leaders are new to their roles and it is too soon to show their impact on the curriculum. They have not had the opportunity to check that teachers consistently expect pupils to make rapid progress.

Parents are positive about the work of the school and typically make comments such as, 'I like everything, and the staff are very friendly' and, 'My children are happy and want to go to school.' All the parents who responded to 'Parent View' said that they would recommend the school to others.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and records are detailed and of high quality. All members of staff are trained in how to care for the pupils and are checked for suitability for working in school. Pupils told me that they feel safe at school and are not concerned about bullying because it does not happen often. One pupil in Year 2 was keen to point out, 'The teachers look after us.' Parents are also confident that their children are looked after well. One parent said, 'My children feel safe' and, 'Everyone is well-behaved.' Throughout the school, including in the early years provision, there is a calm atmosphere that is conducive to good learning. Children in the early years provision feel secure and are confident because they are clear about daily routines such as reading and counting the days of the week at the start of each day.

Inspection findings

- We agreed to explore four key lines of enquiry in addition to checking the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- First, we looked at the teaching and progress of disadvantaged pupils currently at your school to check that they were learning fast enough. In 2016, these pupils did less well than other pupils in reading and mathematics in the early years provision and in phonics in Year 2.
- We found that in the early years provision, reading and mathematics are promoted effectively, and all groups of children learn quickly. Samples of the pupils' work and school information show that, across the school, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress, including in phonics in Year 2. In most classes, disadvantaged pupils are learning at least as quickly as their peers. You have rigorous systems for checking on the learning of these pupils and provide tailored

individual support as needed. There is little difference between the attainment of these pupils and others currently at the school.

- Next, we checked teaching, attainment and progress in key stage 1. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was weaker in this part of the school. In 2016, attainment overall was well below average for the most able pupils in Year 2.
- We found that attainment in phonics (the sounds letters make) by the end of Year 1 has been rising year on year for the last three years. You have strengthened the curriculum for reading, writing and mathematics. School information and pupils' work show that progress is good, and attainment is rising for all groups of pupils across all subjects. Teachers promote new vocabulary well. For example, in Year 2 they used terms such as 'inverse' to help pupils to check their calculations. In Year 1, pupils learned about similes when describing the aliens in a story.
- We examined rates of attendance, especially for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as these groups had slightly lower attendance than others in 2016.
- Leaders effectively monitor attendance and make effective use of external agencies to challenge and support pupils who have more persistent absence. This year, rates of attendance have increased significantly, and there is little difference between the attendance of various groups of pupils, including those who have had slightly lower attendance in the past.
- Finally, we looked at the quality of pupils' work in science. In 2016, while science results were at least as strong as those in reading, writing and mathematics, girls attained less well than boys at the end of key stage 2.
- You have developed the science curriculum this year so that teachers are clearer about what they need to cover. Teachers are providing greater opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations than in previous years. The pupils' work shows that they make good use of their mathematics to support their learning in science.
- You have established a comprehensive system for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress in science. Pupils' current science work shows that there is no marked difference between the progress of girls and boys. There is, however, some variability in the quality of the pupils' written work in science. Teachers do not consistently challenge the pupils enough and expect pupils to use their reasoning to demonstrate the depth of their understanding in their writing. Some activities do not focus enough on extending pupils' learning.
- In addition to the key lines of enquiry, we agreed to look at the role of your new middle leaders. Your established leaders are monitoring progress well. Your new leaders have received relevant training but have not yet had the opportunity to monitor pupils' progress across the curriculum. For example, work in science is not checked rigorously enough.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers increase the depth of pupils' knowledge and understanding in science and raise expectations for the quality of pupils' written science work
- middle leaders are given the opportunity to monitor progress across the curriculum to raise standards.

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

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I carried out the following activities:

- observed teaching and learning across the school during learning walks with the headteacher
- met with the headteacher and members of the governing body
- held informal discussions with parents and considered 27 responses to Parent View
- considered a range of information supplied by the school, the school development plan and records relating to attendance and safeguarding procedures
- listened to pupils reading.