

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



1 December 2016

Mrs Jackie Tomlinson
Headteacher
St Martin de Porres Catholic Primary School
Oakland Road
Birmingham
B13 9DN

Dear Mrs Tomlinson

Short inspection of St Martin de Porres Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 November 2016, 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 March 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. After you became the executive headteacher of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, you continued to ensure that pupils made at least good progress at St Martin de Porres Catholic Primary School.

You, and leaders at all levels, have a very clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. You have used this well to take informed action to further improve the quality of education which the school provides.

Effective action has been taken to address the areas for improvement identified during the last inspection. Staff routinely match activities to the stage pupils have reached and provide opportunities for pupils to become confident, independent learners. Pupils are given time to think about their learning and work well with staff and other pupils in order to think deeply about their work. Teachers carefully show pupils how to carry out calculations in mathematics and talk through the process using academic language. As a result, outcomes have remained good and they were particularly strong across the school in 2015.

Outcomes were not as strong in key stage 1 in 2013 or at key stage 2 in 2016. Middle-ability pupils made slower progress than others by the end of Year 6 and outcomes in mathematics did not match those in reading and writing in 2016. However, leaders took effective action to improve attainment in key stage 1 and pupils currently in key stage 2 are making faster progress than last year's Year 6. Leaders have also used their knowledge of the school to make improvements in the

teaching of mathematics and to ensure that middle-ability pupils are challenged to make more rapid progress.

Staff strive to achieve the best possible outcomes for the pupils in the school. Pupils are taught well, they make good progress, they behave well and they are safe.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and high quality. Pupils feel safe, and all staff and parents who made their views known during the inspection said that pupils are safe in school.

The site is secure and pupils are taught about fire safety, road safety and 'stranger danger'. Pupils are also taught how to stay safe when using the internet, and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibility to keep pupils safe. Staff have had relevant and up-to-date training and they know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Consequently, referrals are timely, outside agencies are used effectively and matters are followed up as necessary.

Safeguarding policy and practice are robust, records are well kept and stored securely and appropriate checks on staff have taken place. Keeping children safe is a key part of the school's culture.

Inspection findings

- Leadership and management have remained of a high quality in the school. Leaders have maintained a positive and ambitious culture and they have taken effective action to continue to make improvements.
- Staff work well together for the benefit of the pupils, and teachers value the training that they are given to help them to improve their practice. The management of teachers' performance is used effectively to set and monitor targets to enhance the quality of education provided by the school.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have the skills, knowledge and expertise to offer appropriate support and challenge and regularly attend training to ensure that they have a full understanding of educational developments.
- There is some very high-quality teaching in the school. Teaching assistants are well deployed and questions are used well by staff to deepen pupils' understanding. Staff plan activities carefully so that pupils can make good progress from their starting points, and information contained within high-quality displays helps pupils find things out without asking the teacher. Independence is also encouraged as pupils are given time to think.
- Where teaching is most effective, there is a clear focus upon learning. Objective and outcome stickers are used well by some teachers to ensure that pupils are

clear about what they are learning and to provide a focus for marking. However, although all staff follow the school's marking policy, this system is relatively new and not embedded. Consequently, it is not yet fully effective in improving pupils' outcomes.

- Staff use time well and 'model' what they want pupils to do in a range of lessons, including mathematics. They talk through activities using academic language and subject-specific terms and, after showing pupils what they want them to do, they give them time to do it themselves.
- As a result of good teaching over time, outcomes have been good since the last inspection. Current pupils are also making rapid progress.
- Pupils read for pleasure and to access information. The most able readers read suitable material and those who find reading more challenging can use the sounds that letters represent to work out words.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start to learning. Over the last three years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been increasing and is above average.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics in Year 1 has also been on an improving trend and is also above average. Almost all pupils in Year 1 in 2016, for example, reached this standard.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 has risen over time. Year 2 pupils attained particularly well in 2015.
- At the end of key stage 2, since the last inspection, outcomes in writing have been consistently strong. In reading and mathematics, outcomes have been more varied. Achievement in 2013 and 2015, for example, was high, but it was not as strong in 2016. Leaders are taking effective action to address this.
- Disadvantaged pupils are achieving well overall. The school makes effective use of the pupil premium. In Year 6 in 2015, these pupils made strong progress from their previous starting points. Although in 2016 disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 did not do as well, disadvantaged pupils currently in school, especially in Years 2 and 6, are making good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- In Year 6 in 2016, those pupils who had previous starting points of middle ability did not perform as well as similar pupils nationally in reading and mathematics. School leaders are aware of this. They are closely analysing information showing pupils' progress in order to identify specific actions to address this. Middle-ability pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 are making improved progress. However, it is too early to fully evaluate the impact of leaders' actions.
- Pupils are keen to learn and have positive attitudes towards their studies. They are punctual, and attendance has improved since the last inspection. Fundamental British values are promoted well and pupils are tolerant, respectful and understand right and wrong. Poor behaviour is very rare and there have

been few instances of bullying since the last inspection. All parents who made their views known believe that their children are well looked after in the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve across the school so that pupils make accelerated progress in all year groups
- strategies that are in place to improve outcomes for middle-ability pupils are effective
- the use of objective and outcome stickers, which give clear guidance to pupils and staff about the purpose of learning activities, is embedded across the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Archdiocese of Birmingham and the director of children's services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection I met with you, other leaders, the chair of the governing body and a small group of staff. I also met with the consultant who advises school leaders on school improvement and a representative of the Birmingham education partnership. My focus was on whether outcomes and teaching had remained good, the progress of middle-ability pupils, whether safeguarding was effective and the impact of leadership and management.

I spoke informally with parents at the beginning of the day and with pupils throughout the inspection. You and I made short visits to every classroom. I reviewed a range of documentation, including the most recent information about pupils' progress, leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, documents related to behaviour, safety and attendance, and the minutes of meetings of the governing body. I also considered 16 responses to Parent View, 10 free text comments from parents, eight responses to the staff questionnaire and 24 returns from the pupils' questionnaire.