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Mr Steve Tindall
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Tindall

Short inspection of Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 November 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in December 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Since the previous inspection, Holy Family Catholic Primary School has converted to an academy. It joined the Xavier Catholic Learning Trust in September 2016 and is part of a multi-academy trust of 10 Catholic schools. The trust works collaboratively for the benefit of the children in its schools.

You ensure that the school is a caring school, underpinned by a strong Christian ethos. You have continued to strengthen the staff team and have gathered an effective senior team to support you in your work. Staff turnover in the school is low, demonstrating the staff members' commitment to the school. Very effective teaching in key stage 2 is leading to a high proportion of pupils making strong progress and reaching very high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The leader for early years has raised expectations for the youngest pupils' rates of progress. As a result, skills and knowledge in the specific areas of literacy and mathematics are very strong.

The overwhelming majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and have a love of learning. They engage fully in their lessons. They have outstanding attitudes to their

work and behave well around the school. Pupils were keen to tell me how they support each other so that the school in which they learn is friendly and tolerant. This stems from you and your governors' expectation that all pupils should succeed and realise their full potential.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of care and education that their children receive. The approachability of staff and leaders, as well as the range of extra-curricular activities the school provides, is very much appreciated by parents. One parent told me, 'We are very proud to say our children attend Holy Family' and another praised the 'excellent communication informing me of both my children's strengths and weaknesses'.

The leadership team has responded effectively to the improvements asked of the school in the previous inspection report. Leaders have ensured that teaching is now more precisely focused. This has resulted in the strong progress that most pupils made in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 2 last year. This is a positive trend across the school and pupils are making more rapid progress in their learning than in the past. We saw good examples of pupils working together when the Year 4 class shared their ideas about the character Ivan from their book 'The Ice Palace' so they could write effective character descriptions.

Outcomes in key stage 1 in English and mathematics are stronger than when the school was previously inspected. However, just occasionally, some teachers ask pupils to repeat work which they have shown they can already do. Nevertheless, there is good capacity for maintaining and building on the improvements already secured.

Safeguarding is effective.

Senior leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and child protection records are detailed and of high quality. As designated safeguarding lead, you make sure that policies to prevent risks are implemented well. All members of staff receive appropriate child protection training and you ensure the continued focus on this area through staff meeting updates and briefings. As a result, staff are vigilant and intervene if pupils are at risk or there is a concern.

When intervention is required, you act to ensure that relevant outside agencies are involved to work with pupils and their families to address their specific needs. You are tenacious in following up issues to secure positive outcomes with the local agencies.

Your systems for ensuring that stringent checks are carried out before adults are employed or allowed to work in the school are robust. Your school business manager keeps meticulous records of these checks. The governing body regularly scrutinises the record of checks to ensure that it meets legal requirements.

Inspection findings

- My visits with you to lessons and sampling of pupils' work provided strong evidence of the effectiveness of the school's response to the previous inspection, which asked for improvements in teaching. I focused on the way this impacted on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and on boys' achievement.
- In 2018, Year 6 pupils attained well above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at the higher standards and greater depth. They made exceptionally strong progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics to achieve this. Our observations and scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed that current pupils are continuing to make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with SEND are well cared for at Holy Family. Your new leader for SEND has made a useful start and has quickly focused on the identification and careful assessment of pupils to make sure that their specific needs are well understood. Teaching assistants are effectively trained, and leaders have appointed a new teacher specifically to support pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils are making increased progress academically, emotionally and socially.
- Teachers now consider the impact of their work on boys and use very effective strategies to engage them, especially in writing and reading activities. For example, the use of an 'immersive experience' in the multi-media suite helped boys, particularly, to think deeply about the impact of the First World War and allowed them to begin to write letters from the trenches to a loved one.
- Our scrutiny of work in books and conversations with pupils in lessons showed that most pupils continue to be challenged with appropriate tasks. Just occasionally, books showed that some pupils were being asked to repeat work in mathematics which they had already shown they could do.
- We looked together at the Reception class to check the effectiveness of assessment for these children. We found a class of very confident children who had already made great strides in their learning due to the careful preparation for, and precise awareness of, each child's needs. Children's good personal and social skills allowed them to concentrate well on their chosen activity and to work diligently with the adults in the setting.
- Your leader for Reception is confident and accurate in her assessment of children and was able to talk about her demanding expectations of outcomes for the current cohort of children. This was seen when a child sorted toy animals into species, identified each group by name and then counted and used a number card to show how many of each animal he had. When challenged, he confidently added one more giraffe to make 19!
- We agreed that I would check how effectively the school worked with parents. It quickly became obvious that Holy Family is held in extremely high regard by most parents. They were particularly pleased with the way you and other staff communicate with them, and almost all described the individual way you know

your pupils. Parents with pupils who experience challenges in learning were clear that they were included in the planning for their son or daughter and kept regularly up to date with their progress.

- A very small number of parents expressed concerns about the way the school responded to pupils' behaviour. However, on further questioning of pupils and parents alike, everyone agreed that the school was very effective at dealing with poor behaviour when it arose. Parents and pupils felt that you and your staff were vigilant, resolving any incidents, including bullying, very well.
- You and the governors are appreciative of the opportunities that being a part of the Xavier Trust brings you. You specifically mentioned the support from trust officers for the business functions needed to run a school and the opportunities to work with other leaders. You value highly the support from the network learning groups which focus on subjects and phases. As a result, teachers with whom I spoke were aware of the work of the trust and said it had helped them to improve the quality of their teaching.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers use assessment data precisely to plot the next steps in pupils' learning.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

David Cousins
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your senior leadership team and a selection of leaders and teachers from across the school. I met parents, four members of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the trust. I spoke formally with a group of pupils and informally with others around the school and in lessons. Furthermore, I observed teaching and learning with you in every classroom, as well as looking at pupils' books. I examined a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, pupils' assessment information, a range of policies and your evaluation of how well the school is performing. I also undertook a review of the school's website. As part of the inspection, I considered 112 responses to Ofsted's free-text service and 124 responses on Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff or pupil questionnaires.