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Mrs Dawn Breeze  
Headteacher  
Holy Family Catholic Primary School  
Amberley Road  
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Bristol  
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Dear Mrs Breeze

### **Short inspection of Holy Family Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 29 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 May 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Your leadership has provided a strong drive for Holy Family Catholic Primary School to continue to improve. Staff and pupils take great pride in being part of the lively learning community you have built, based on values that prepare pupils well for the next steps in their education. Parents say how welcoming the school feels and most praise the individual attention that their children receive.

You and your leadership team are determined to improve further the quality of education provided by your school. You have tackled well the areas highlighted for development in the previous inspection report. For example, the teaching of mathematics has improved and pupils tackle problems enthusiastically, making good progress. Close scrutiny of pupils' work and assessment information are used well to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress, and this in turn has contributed to improvement in teaching.

The governing body provides high-quality support and rigorously challenges school leaders. Members of the governing body have a useful range of expertise which supports the school well. Governors scrutinise performance data in their areas of responsibility and hold leaders to account for pupils' progress. They closely monitor the effectiveness of the school's actions, such as planned interventions to accelerate the progress of pupils liable to fall behind, and make recommendations at a

strategic level. You, your governors and the leadership team have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and areas for further development, such as pupils' writing. Governors monitor safeguarding procedures frequently and pupils feel safe in the school. However, governors have not rigorously checked that leaders use best practice in centrally recording the vetting of staff.

Parents appreciate the opportunity to learn alongside their children, for example in a mathematics lesson working with a small group of pupils. As a consequence, they feel able to support their child more effectively. Most parents are confident that school leaders deal well with any incidents effectively and keep them informed. However, a small group of parents still have a negative view of the school.

You have recently placed an emphasis on improving pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour. As a consequence, pupils follow instructions well, for example on entering the school and organising themselves at the end of lessons.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

A strong culture of safeguarding exists in Holy Family School. Teachers and teaching assistants closely monitor pupils in order to protect them from all possible risks. Staff know pupils and their families well and, as a matter of course, keep leaders informed about any concerns.

Frequent training means that staff are clear about how changes in safeguarding requirements affect their practice. For example, they know that they need to be vigilant in noticing signs that pupils may have been subject to extreme views. Leaders have an effective system to monitor pupils' well-being and staff work with families for the benefit of the children. Staff are aware of how to involve external agencies rapidly if needed.

It was not clear at the start of my visit whether the checks on the vetting of staff were complete. You have rectified this and all required checks have been carried out.

The pupils I spoke to know who they can talk to if they have a concern or worry and they feel safe in school. They are confident that teachers will take prompt action.

### **Inspection findings**

- Children enter the early years class with skills broadly in line with those found nationally. Through good teaching, informed by detailed observation and accurate records, children make good progress. Additional adults provide strong individual support for those whose progress needs to accelerate and for small-group work.
- Children respond well to the praise they are given and this contributes to their enjoyment of learning and a strong sense of being able to do more. The carefully planned learning environment provides opportunities for children to practise their writing and reading skills in areas that inspire creative play. Most children are

ready to learn well in Year 1.

- Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress. Using performance data, leaders rightly identified that more pupils should be working at the highest levels in writing and mathematics. Evidence of work in books and from observing lessons shows that pupils are now being successfully challenged to do this. For example, the most able Year 1 pupils rearranged numbers in a challenging subtraction sum and explained their reasoning.
- Leaders have developed a strong reading culture in the school that parents appreciate and pupils enjoy. Pupils are encouraged to read frequently. The less able pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds well to read new, demanding words. The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, read difficult texts with confidence and enthusiasm. They are becoming avid readers.
- In 2016, Year 6 girls made more progress than boys in writing. The improvement of boys' writing has been a priority for the school, with staff meeting time being used to examine pupils' work closely to establish models of good practice. This has contributed to an improvement in boys' writing so that they are now making good progress.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is good as pupils are taught well and the subject is led with enthusiasm. Teaching enables pupils to be challenged using well-targeted problems to develop a depth of understanding of mathematical ideas.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged make good progress. Leaders closely scrutinise their progress and use pupil premium funding to provide appropriate support and challenge in their learning. There has been a particular focus on improving the attendance of this group of pupils, which was too low in the past. The effective use of family support services has meant that attendance has now improved for these pupils, which is now close to the national average for all pupils.
- Leaders have developed a well-balanced and broad curriculum. Pupils enjoy learning about topics in depth. For example, one group of pupils was excitedly designing their own Anderson shelter when learning about the second world war. Rightly, leaders have identified science as a subject that needs improvement. In 2016, Year 6 pupils' attainment was slightly below national figures. Although the science curriculum is now more investigative, it is too early to see an improvement in science attainment in pupils' books.
- Leaders have responded well to recent changes in the proportion of pupils attending the school who do not speak English as their first language. School leaders swiftly communicate with families, using staff who can translate, and parents are encouraged to become part of the school's community. Consequently, pupils settle quickly and make good progress, including in reading – using their newly acquired knowledge of phonics.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the system for recording checks for the vetting of staff is clear, concise and monitored by leaders

- standards in science continue to improve
- the school continues to improve its communication with parents.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Jenner  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and we discussed the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and attendance, and action taken to improve the school in areas highlighted in the previous inspection. I talked informally with parents before the school day started. I also held discussions with senior and middle leaders, a representative group from the governing body and a group of teachers and teaching assistants. We visited all classes and looked at a sample of children's and pupils' work from the early years to Year 6. This included work from both girls and boys. I listened to four pupils from different classes reading and I spoke to them about their experiences of school life. I looked at the survey results from Parent View, the staff survey and pupil questionnaire and I considered any comments written on each survey. I also examined the records kept by school leaders concerning the safeguarding of children.

The key lines of enquiry tested on the short inspection were:

- whether there is a difference in the rates of progress for boys and girls in writing
- how teaching enables pupils in the early years and key stage 1 to reach the highest levels possible in reading, writing and mathematics
- whether the curriculum is broad and well taught, particularly science
- how effective governors and leaders are in their monitoring of policies
- how successful the school has been in raising the attendance of disadvantaged pupils
- how leaders ensure that communication is as strong as possible with parents and external agencies.