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Mr Michael George
Headteacher
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Dear Mr George

Short inspection of St Hugh of Lincoln Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 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 the school was judged to be good in March 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, the staff and governors share the same vision and ambition for the pupils at St Hugh's to achieve the very best outcomes. The Xavier Catholic Education Trust supports all that you are doing to achieve this, and the high-quality training and development they provide is enabling the school to continue its journey of improvement.

The school's mantra, 'At St Hugh's we choose', which is known and echoed across the school by all stakeholders, reflects the strong focus that leaders place on pupils making the right choices. These include being ready to learn, showing respect, demonstrating good manners and living out the Christian ethos.

Pupils say that they respect and trust their teachers and this is reciprocated by staff. As a result, pupils feel that they are important and well looked after. You and your team have created a safe and secure environment where pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in their consistently above-average attendance.

Parents are very supportive of leaders' work to ensure that their children are happy and do well. They recognise and celebrate the Catholic family feel of the school, and enjoy being part of the close-knit community. One parent commented, 'This is a good school with an emphasis on Catholic values of being kind to each other and treating each other as a family.' A small number of parents commented that

communication could be improved when they raise concerns with the school. Leaders, with the support of the academy trust, are working hard to improve all aspects of communication.

In the previous inspection, the following strengths were highlighted: a strong culture of care, above-average attainment and a clear vision. These strengths have been maintained. Leaders were asked to check the impact of pupil premium funding on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. You have rightly focused on closely monitoring the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Although small in number, these pupils make similar progress to their peers through regular, timely interventions. You were also asked to improve the precision of the improvement plan and the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, both of which you have done successfully.

Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is above that which is reached nationally. Progress between Year 2 and Year 6 is broadly in line with the national average. Assessment information for current pupils, supported by work in books, shows that pupils' progress is improving but that it is inconsistent and that some pupils do not make as much progress as they should.

Safeguarding is effective.

School staff, governors and the academy trust share a commitment to safeguarding, with pupils' welfare being a priority. There are clear policies in place to keep pupils safe and these are regularly reviewed with staff and governors. Records are detailed and all child protection concerns are followed up, with appropriate actions taken to safeguard pupils' welfare. There are robust procedures in place to ensure that staff employed at the school are vetted effectively.

Staff, pupils and parents agree that St Hugh's provides a safe and secure environment for pupils to learn. One pupil commented, 'I feel safe because you can always find someone to talk to and make you feel better.' Governors and school staff benefit from high-quality training in safeguarding, provided by the Xavier Trust. As a result, induction training for new members of staff and governors is comprehensive, enabling them to make the right decisions should any concerns arise. Welfare arrangements for younger children are met effectively and include provision of four qualified paediatric first aiders.

Inspection findings

- At the beginning of the inspection we agreed to look at the progress pupils make; how well most-able girls achieve; the development of your new curriculum; and how well phonics is taught.
- Assessment information from July 2018 shows that progress is only average in reading, writing and mathematics across the school by the end of Year 6. When we looked at current assessment information and work in books, it was evident that, although progress overall is improving, it is not yet consistent across the school. As a result, not enough pupils are making the necessary strong progress

of which they are capable. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to ensure greater consistency, but acknowledge that this remains a focus for improvement.

- In 2018, no girls achieved greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, and in Year 6 twice as many boys achieved the highest standards in mathematics as girls. Leaders have recognised and successfully taken action to tackle the fact that the most able girls were not achieving as well as boys. Teachers now analyse gaps in girls' learning and carefully target them to make good progress. Consequently, the proportion of girls working above the age-related standard is on a par with that of boys.
- Leaders implemented a new curriculum in September 2018. The new approach is planned to provide more opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, such as science and geography. Subject leaders are beginning to monitor their areas of responsibility to ensure that pupils have access to the full breadth of the curriculum. Initial signs are positive, with subjects such as music, art and computing, all of which pupils enjoy learning, having greater prominence. Leaders rightly recognise that they need to monitor the delivery of the curriculum carefully to ensure that the planned skills and knowledge develop and deepen over time.
- In recent years, the proportion of Year 1 pupils who passed the phonics screening check has been below the national figure. Individual pupils are now targeted with regular interventions to ensure that they make better progress and achieve higher outcomes. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in 2018 was above the national figure. Similarly, Year 2 pupils who did not meet the standard in Year 1 receive intensive support to ensure that they reach the required standard by the end of Year 2. This has been highly successful. Over the last three years 100% of pupils have reached the required standard before entering the juniors.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics and that this is consistent throughout the school
- the new arrangements for the curriculum are effectively monitored and evaluated by subject leaders to ensure that the curriculum meets the differing needs of pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees, 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

William James
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, your leadership team and several members of staff. We reviewed your management structure and the improvements which have been made since the previous inspection. I visited several lessons to observe learning. I examined pupils' work, focusing on the performance of higher attaining girls. I held a meeting with three governors, including the chair. I undertook a meeting with the chief executive officer of The Xavier Catholic Education Trust. Prior to the inspection, I examined a variety of documents relating to the school. These included published performance information, your school's self-evaluation document and the school's website. I took into account 102 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also considered 52 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 26 responses to the staff survey. I considered a range of documentation, including documents relating to safeguarding and governance. I also met with a group of pupils to discuss their learning and views about the school.