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Mrs Catherine Walker
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Hazelgrove Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 3PQ

Dear Mrs Walker

Short inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 January 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 October 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your senior leadership team provide strong leadership for the school. Since the previous inspection, you have secured notable developments in teaching and learning during a period of expansion for the school. You have used training very well to develop teachers' subject knowledge and to strengthen their expertise in teaching pupils of different abilities. As a result, pupils' progress has continued to improve since the previous inspection, and standards are rising. In 2017, outcomes were above the national average at the end of both key stages in reading, writing and mathematics.

You have addressed in full the key issues identified at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers have much higher expectations of all pupils, and set work which extends pupils' learning effectively. As a result, the most able pupils make better progress than at the time of the previous inspection and achieve well. The proportion of pupils achieving the highest standards at the end of Year 6 increased in 2017 and were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.

You and your team lead by example. You have the same high expectations of yourselves as you do of staff and pupils. You review the quality of teaching and learning systematically and take effective action to address any weaknesses. You are understandably proud of the school's achievements and are ambitious for its future. You have rightly recognised that, while all groups make strong progress, those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and the

very small number of disadvantaged pupils, could make even better progress.

Recent developments in assessment procedures are giving you a sharper view of how well different groups are learning so that you can respond more swiftly to pupils' needs. You are now making sure that teachers, leaders and governors put this high-quality information to good use to check pupils' progress and make necessary adjustments to teaching.

Pupils are well behaved, polite and kind to each other. They respect adults and listen carefully to their teachers. The school's welcoming, friendly atmosphere contributes very well to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and rigorously maintained, so that pupils can learn and play safely. Good-quality training ensures that staff and governors are knowledgeable about safeguarding issues and are confident about what to do should a concern arise. Leaders' weekly safeguarding briefings ensure that staff are well informed about safeguarding issues where appropriate.

Governors take their responsibilities for pupils' safety very seriously. They work closely with leaders to ensure that safeguarding checks are complete and up to date. For example, governors make good use of regular safeguarding reviews to refine and update arrangements wherever necessary. One governor's comment, 'Safeguarding is for everyone', reflects the school's shared approach to keeping pupils safe.

Staff take good care of pupils and are alert to their needs. As a result, pupils are confident that adults will keep them safe, and said that their teachers listen carefully to their views. Most parents and carers who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that they feel that their children are safe and happy.

Inspection findings

■ During the inspection, I focused on:

- how well leaders use additional funds to support pupils' learning, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
- how effectively teaching ensures that the most able pupils achieve as well as they should
- the quality of teaching and learning in the early years
- how well leaders ensure that pupils are safe and attend well.

■ Leaders take great care to use additional funds sensibly and effectively, including

pupil premium and SEN funding. They have recently developed the school's well-established assessment procedures further so that they can check pupils' progress more closely. As a result, leaders have a more precise view of how well different groups of pupils are learning, and they are in a better position to respond to pupils' needs. However, these developments are at an early stage and not yet used fully by all leaders and governors to secure a clear view of the school's performance.

- Teachers have welcomed opportunities to secure improvements in their practice during the past year. They share leaders' commitment to ensuring that all groups achieve equally well. Teachers are increasingly knowledgeable about how to support pupils who have differing needs. They are now working closely with leaders to fine tune their teaching skills so that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and disadvantaged pupils, make even better progress.
- Teachers provide children in early years with a wide range of appealing and stimulating activities. As a result, children are active, interested and keen to learn. Skilful teaching and secure relationships ensure that children make strong progress and are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- In the past year, leaders have reviewed and improved the quality of teaching and learning in early years, following a dip in outcomes at the end of Reception Year in 2016. For example, they have improved the early years outdoor area, creating more opportunities for children to learn while they play, so that children learn equally well throughout the early years areas. This has been particularly successful in increasing boys' engagement and progress. Improvements in teaching led to a marked increase in the proportion of children achieving a good level of development in 2017.
- Pupils are happy and secure in school. Pupils who spoke with the inspector, and most of those who completed the Ofsted questionnaire, said that they feel safe in school and enjoy learning.
- Attendance is consistently higher than the national average. Leaders work closely with parents and agencies to ensure that all groups of pupils attend regularly. In the past year, leaders have focused successfully on making sure that all groups attend regularly, and attendance rates continue to improve as a result.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- recent developments in assessment procedures are fully established and used consistently by leaders, governors and teachers to secure equally rapid and sustained progress for all groups of pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Sackett
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I visited nine classes with you and your assistant headteachers. I looked at pupils' workbooks during lessons. I also met with your English and mathematics leaders to review a sample of pupils' work. I talked with pupils during my visits to the classrooms and in the playground during the lunchtime break.

I met with you and your assistant headteachers during the inspection. I also met with five governors, including the chair of governors, and with a local authority representative. I took account of 89 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and two letters sent into the school during the inspection for my attention. I also spoke with a parent by telephone. I considered 35 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and 104 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire. I reviewed the school's website and considered a range of documents, including the summary of the school's effectiveness, the school's improvement plan and external reports about the school's performance. I looked at safeguarding documents and records and considered information about pupils' attendance.