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Mrs Catherine Burnham  
Headteacher  
Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School  
Arch Road  
Hersham  
Surrey  
KT12 4QT

Dear Mrs Burnham

### **Short inspection of Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 25 September 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 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since starting at the school in 2017, you have set out a clear vision of enabling pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes and to become mature, caring individuals. Senior leaders, staff, governors and the academy trust all endorse and actively support you in your ambition. Leaders at all levels and governors have a clear view of the strengths of the school and the areas that need to be tackled to bring about further improvements.

The school community understands and fully embraces the school's mission statement of 'Learners, Believers, Friends'. Even young pupils can explain how these words apply to them. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. All who expressed an opinion said that their children are happy in school. Several reserved particular praise for its caring, family ethos and the way that staff help pupils to develop their character. One parent said that: 'This is an amazing school that cares for every individual and their needs.' Another said that she sent her children here because she wanted them to have manners, and be kind and gentle. These were qualities that she saw in Year 6 pupils when she visited the school.

Pupils love coming to school. They behave well in class, around the school and at playtimes. They are polite to adults and classmates alike and cooperate well. Pupils flourish in the positive, respectful relationships that underpin the school's work.

Teachers plan lessons that spark pupils' interest and help them to develop very positive attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils work hard and strive to achieve

their best. Teachers and learning support assistants typically have high expectations for what pupils will achieve. In turn, pupils rise to the challenge and achieve well. Leaders recognise that there are still one or two remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. This means that occasionally pupils are not set work that challenges them to achieve their full potential.

In the last two years, pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 attained high standards and made strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils across the school generally make good progress, especially in Years 5 and 6. Those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the few disadvantaged pupils also make good progress from their starting points.

The wider curriculum contains many exciting learning opportunities for pupils. In religious education (RE) and science, many pupils achieve as well as they do in English and mathematics. However, standards are not as high in other curriculum subjects.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. The proportion of children who reached a good level of development in 2018 was above that seen nationally in recent years. The number of children who exceeded the early learning goals in reading and mathematics was also well above the national average of 2017.

Morale among staff is high. All who answered the staff questionnaire agreed that they are proud to be part of the school team. Senior leaders ensure that teachers and learning support assistants alike have the right training and support to be able to carry out their work effectively.

Governors have a good balance of skills to provide effective strategic leadership to the school. They know the school well because they draw their evidence from a range of sources, including from their own visits to the school and conversations with pupils. Governors and the academy trust share the same high aspirations for the school as senior leaders, and they offer the right balance of support and challenge to help the school improve.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school, underpinned by regular training and updates in all aspects of child protection. Staff fully embrace their responsibility to protect the pupils in the school and understand how to report and record their concerns. Senior leaders keep detailed records of concerns about pupils' welfare and are quick to take the right actions to secure pupils' well-being. This includes engaging with other agencies when the need arises.

Pupils feel safe in school. Parents and staff agree that this is true. Pupils have complete confidence in staff to look after them. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep safe in a range of situations, including online. Pupils have a clear understanding of bullying in all its different forms.

However, bullying is rare and, if ever it does occur, staff deal with it quickly and decisively.

## **Inspection findings**

- We agreed to look closely at four aspects of the school's work during this inspection. The first of these was to consider how senior leaders and governors have maintained and built on the strong progress seen in key stage 2 in the last two years, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers plan lessons based on secure assessments of pupils' prior learning. They expect high standards of presentation and accuracy both in English and mathematics, and pupils rise to the challenge. In mathematics, teachers generally provide pupils with the chance to practise and reinforce existing knowledge. They also give pupils stimulating work which makes them think carefully and discuss their ideas. In reading, teachers typically introduce pupils to a wide range of texts, which they discuss in some depth. This results in pupils becoming fluent, enthusiastic readers.
- The vast majority of current pupils continue to make strong progress. However, just a few inconsistencies remain, where teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not as high as where teaching is most effective. On these occasions, pupils are not fully challenged to do their best.
- Next, we considered how well teaching enables the most able pupils to achieve the high standards they are capable of. We particularly focused on writing in the early years, and on mathematics in key stage 1. The number of children who exceeded the early learning goals in reading and mathematics in recent years has been above the national figure, but fewer have achieved the same high standard in writing.
- Children in the early years now achieve well in writing because staff place a very high priority on equipping them with the phonics skills they need to be successful. Teachers take every opportunity to pepper lessons with phonics so that children are consistently reminded of the sounds of letters and practise using them throughout the day. Staff immerse children in stories and books that develop their vocabulary and offer children a treasure trove of ideas for their own writing.
- As a result of this improved provision and better progress, outcomes in writing are improving in the early years. More children achieved and exceeded the early learning goal in 2018.
- Teachers ensure that pupils in key stage 1 develop a mastery of basic mathematical knowledge and skills, such as place value, counting and simple addition and subtraction. Pupils build on this by starting to tackle more challenging work that involves thinking and reasoning mathematically. As a result, pupils achieve well and are making good progress, including the most able pupils.
- Thirdly, we looked at how well the curriculum meets the needs of pupils and enables them to make good progress in a wide range of subjects. The curriculum is broad and rich and offers pupils to develop skills and acquire knowledge,

especially in RE and science. Work in these subjects shows that pupils take pride in their work and learn well. Pupils benefit from many visits to interesting places to bring their learning to life. There is a wide range of clubs for pupils to join, which incorporate a range of different interests and hobbies. However, leaders recognise that there is still work to be done to ensure that pupils achieve as well across all subjects as they do in English and mathematics.

- Finally, we focused on the impact of leaders' actions to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. You have spared no effort in ensuring that disadvantaged pupils are encouraged to attend school regularly. You hold meetings with all families where attendance is too low, and this has resulted in improved attendance for disadvantaged pupils. Almost no disadvantaged pupils are now persistently absent from school.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they iron out the few remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching so that pupils achieve as well in all classes as they do where teaching is most effective
- the wider curriculum is further strengthened so that pupils' knowledge and skills are deepened across a wide range of subjects.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body 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

Bruce Waelend  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and other leaders, including the deputy and assistant headteachers to discuss various aspects of the school's work. I also had meetings with four members of the governing body and the chief executive of the academy trust. I visited classes in all year groups with you and the deputy headteacher to observe teaching and learning, to talk to pupils and look at their work. I observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at playtime. I also held a meeting with 10 pupils drawn from Years 2 to 6 and discussed their work with them. I considered 36 responses to the staff survey, four responses to the pupil survey and 63 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as speaking to several parents on the playground at the end of the day. A range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation documents, school improvement plans, and safeguarding policies, procedures and checks were also taken into account.