



Overview and Scrutiny Ofsted Subgroup

Date: Wednesday, 22 January 2020

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Council Antechamber, Level 2 - Town Hall Extension

This is a **supplementary agenda** containing additional information about the business of the meeting that was not available when the agenda was published

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Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Ofsted Subgroup

Councillors – Lovecy (Chair), Hewitson, Kilpatrick, McHale, Madeleine Monaghan, Reeves, Reid and Stone

Co-opted Members – Mrs J Miles and Dr W Omara

Supplementary Agenda

4. Ofsted Inspections of Manchester Schools

To receive a list of all Manchester schools which have been inspected since the last meeting and the judgements awarded (previously circulated).

To consider inspection reports for a selection of the schools.

4a. Newall Green High School	3 - 10
4b. St Anne's RC Primary School	11 - 18
4c. St John's RC Primary School	19 - 26
4d. Varna Community Primary School	27 - 30

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact the Committee Officer:

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This supplementary agenda was issued on **Thursday, 16 January 2020** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 3, Town Hall Extension (Lloyd Street Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

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2 December 2019

Mrs Kyra Jones
Head of School
Newall Green High School
Greenbrow Road
Wythenshawe
Manchester
M23 2SX

Dear Mrs Jones

Special measures monitoring inspection of Newall Green High School

Following my visit with Dawn Farrent, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 19–20 November 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school’s previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in March 2018. The full list of the areas for improvement that were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers. However, as an exception to this, the Prospere Learning Trust (PLT) may appoint no more than four newly qualified teachers in total to be deployed at the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the PLT, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children’s services for Manchester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

David Selby
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in March 2018

- Rapidly improve outcomes for all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged or have SEN and/or disabilities, so that they make good progress from their starting points.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders monitor, assess and refine improvement plans regularly and rigorously, so that improvements are rapid and sustained
 - all leaders evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' progress
 - leaders use the pupil premium funding so that disadvantaged pupils make the progress that they should
 - leaders manage additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities effectively, so that this group makes at least good progress
 - leaders manage the Year 7 catch-up funding effectively
 - senior leaders assess the quality of teaching in the school accurately so that they can precisely plan the improvements that are urgently required
 - the leadership of teaching, including subject leadership, is effective.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by:
 - insisting that all teachers have the highest expectations so that pupils achieve high standards
 - ensuring that pupils are routinely set work that closely matches their ability, so that they make the progress that they should.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
 - increasing the attendance of all pupils, especially that of disadvantaged pupils, so that it is at least in line with the national average
 - eliminating poor behaviour in lessons and around the school
 - reducing the number of disadvantaged pupils who are excluded from the school.
- Improve the quality of the 16 to 19 study programme by ensuring that all students:
 - attend school regularly
 - complete their study programme
 - achieve qualifications that enable them to progress to their next stage of education, employment or training.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in

order to ascertain how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.
An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 19 November 2019 to 20 November 2019

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documents. They held meetings with the head of school, the executive principal, other senior leaders, middle leaders and a group of teachers. Inspectors met formally with two groups of pupils and had informal conversations with others in class and at other times during the school's day. An inspector met the chair and the chief executive officer of the PLT. These trust representatives are also members of the school's improvement board. A meeting was held with a consultant who provides school improvement advice to the school. An inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors visited lessons, mostly joined by senior leaders. An inspector conducted a scrutiny of pupils' books undertaken jointly with a senior leader.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils on roll has fallen. More pupils in Year 11 left the school at the end of last school year than joined the school in Year 7 at the start of this school year.

Three teachers have left the school. A deputy headteacher and three other teachers have joined the school. A small number of teachers have long-term absence from school.

The number of pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receiving support identified through an education, health and care plan has increased.

The role of the executive principal has further reduced.

Leadership has been strengthened by the appointment of senior and middle leaders with additional temporary responsibilities. These responsibilities correspond to important tasks needed at this stage of the school's improvement.

The progress made by the school in tackling the key areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection

Leaders have ensured that the school's curriculum allows pupils to build up the knowledge they need about the subjects they study. Inspectors saw this in the way learning is organised in Year 11 geography, history and science. In each of these subjects, teachers use a scheme of work that indicates what pupils should learn in each lesson and how this leads to the next. This systematic approach is giving Year 11 pupils confidence that they will do as well as they can in their GCSE examinations at the end of this year. This approach also helps teachers to ensure that the activities they provide for pupils in class are challenging.

The school has continued to become better at identifying the needs of pupils with SEND. Teaching assistants have received training so that they can help the pupils they work with to fully take part in learning.

The achievement of Year 11 pupils in 2019 was still not good enough. However, unconfirmed information about Year 11 pupils' progress indicates that this was stronger than in the previous year. However, it also shows that, on average, pupils gained about one grade lower than similar pupils in other schools in each of their GCSEs. There was also some improvement in pupils' attainment. For example, higher proportions of Year 11 pupils gained standard and strong passes in both English and mathematics. The stronger practice in the school means that pupils currently in the school, including those in Year 11, are learning more effectively.

Leaders and teachers have further emphasised the importance of reading for pleasure and as part of learning. Teachers now expect pupils to read for part of every lesson. Often, this reading is directly linked to the material pupils are studying but, sometimes, teachers provide time for pupils to pursue other reading. In addition, from the start of this school year, all pupils have a weekly lesson that concentrates on their oral skills. This part of the curriculum is still in a relatively early stage of its development, so it is too early to see what its impact has been. Teachers use some of these oracy lessons to boost the reading skills of older pupils who still find it hard to read well.

Leaders have changed their approach to organising the curriculum. From this year, pupils will start their GCSE courses in Year 10. This is to allow them to experience a wider range of subjects for longer and to have a firmer foundation for later study. In addition, leaders have embarked on a review of the curriculum and how it is taught. This well-planned programme has already involved teachers observing the work of their colleagues and considering what approaches work well. Leaders have identified some subjects where Year 11 pupils achieved less well in 2019. Leaders recently completed detailed reviews of how the curriculum offered links to how well pupils learn in these subjects. The findings of these reviews are already being used to help middle leaders improve the curriculum in their subjects.

Staff have now embedded their higher expectations about pupils' behaviour. Pupils now know and normally accept school rules in a positive way. For example, if pupils are seen with a mobile phone by a member of staff, pupils quickly follow the instructions they are given to put the phone away and do so without fuss. Inspectors saw pupils behaving well and trying hard in most lessons they visited. In some classes, and in particular when the curriculum is not interesting or challenging enough, some pupils show less-positive attitudes to their learning.

Incidents of more serious misbehaviour in school are reducing. The number of exclusions has continued to fall, particularly for pupils with SEND.

Attendance is a little lower compared with the same stage of the last school year.

Leaders have carefully analysed patterns in, and the reasons for, pupils' absence. Many pupils continue to attend well. However, there is a group of pupils whose attendance remains very low. Sometimes, the reasons for these pupils' poor attendance arise from situations outside of the school's direct control. The school's records of pupils' punctuality appear to show that this has got worse. However, the opposite is true. The school's expectations have been increased. Pupils are now recorded as late one minute after registers close so there is much less significant lateness from pupils.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leaders have ensured that improvement has continued. They have a detailed understanding of what they have already achieved and what they still need to do. They know the circumstances and needs of pupils, for example in their close analysis of pupils' attendance. Leaders have improved the way that they inform trustees and members of the school improvement board about the school. In addition, leaders arranged for part of the school building to be redecorated. That area of the school is now a more attractive place for learning.

Leaders revised the school's improvement plan for this school year. This allowed them to take account of improvement already achieved and to pay greater attention to the curriculum and how that should be developed. The actions included in the plan remain suitable to ensure that improvement continues. Senior leaders have identified the leaders responsible for making sure that important improvements happen. They have used the new roles within the school's leadership to increase the team of people with such responsibility. Leaders intend to extend the plan further as actions are completed, for example by including actions intended to ensure that the careers education offered by the school fully matches the Gatsby benchmarks.

Leaders have continued to provide training for staff that matches the school's context and improvement priorities. For example, it has included work on the challenges that pupils may face from their earlier experiences. Some of this training is provided jointly with other schools in the PLT. Staff from the school support the learning of their colleagues from other schools in the trust, as well as learning themselves.

Despite leaders' demanding expectations about how members of staff will contribute to the schools' improvement, staff who spoke to inspectors were very positive about the changes in the school. They said that staff morale is high. Leaders have sought ways to make sure that teachers and other members of staff do not spend time and effort on tasks that bring little benefit. For example, they have reduced the number of times the data from testing pupils is collected over the school year. Teachers judge that this now leaves them with more time to concentrate on helping pupils to learn.

Leaders have ensured that the safeguarding of pupils remains a very high priority.

The systems to make sure that pupils are safe and secure continue to work well.

Strengths in the school’s approaches to securing improvement:

- Leaders have continued to develop the wider opportunities that the school offers to pupils. These opportunities often involve local businesses.
- Leaders have continued their careful focus on the urgent priorities identified at the previous inspection. However, they have now started to widen their view and to identify and enhance aspects of the school that were already working well.
- Leaders are seeking ways for pupils to be more involved in their school. Leaders intend to find out more about what pupils think of the school. Staff have just introduced a prefect system and they intend that a pupil council will soon be re-established.
- The reducing role of the executive principal in supporting other leaders has allowed leaders within the school to become increasingly more confident and self-reliant.

Weaknesses in the school’s approaches to securing improvement:

- Despite the improvement in the school and the increasing number of things that pupils can be proud of, some pupils lack pride in what the school offers them and is achieving.

External support

Most of the support the school receives is provided internally within the PLT.

Until very recently, the local authority had not been able to provide additional support to the school in identifying and meeting the needs of the significant number of pupils with complex social and learning needs. A programme to do this has just started.

Inspection of a good school: St Anne's RC Primary School

Carruthers Street, Ancoats, Manchester M4 7EQ

Inspection dates:

26–27 November 2019

Outcome

St Anne's RC Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Anne's is a popular and caring school at the heart of its community. The school's motto, 'Every child, every chance', threads through all aspects of school life. Leaders have high expectations for their pupils, and pupils do their best to reach these.

Leaders have created a safe haven for pupils. Families and pupils are well supported by the school. Pupils feel safe because of the actions that staff take. Pupils are happy and they have many friends. They enjoy learning and playing together. Pupils told me that they are 'a family who know each other well'. Pupils told me that bullying does not happen. If bullying ever happens, leaders deal with it well. Parents and carers agree that their children are safe and happy.

Pupils behave well. They open doors for visitors and are respectful. They enjoy learning because teachers provide activities which are interesting and fun. Pupils value their education and are keen to achieve. They understand how a good education will help them to achieve their goals in life. Pupils have high aspirations for the future.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have clear direction for the school. They are always looking for ways to improve the school and to raise pupils' achievement further. They tackle any weaknesses well and make sure that these improve quickly. Governors know their community and pupils well. They have worked with leaders in the development of the school's curriculum. All staff are ambitious to improve the school. They appreciate the way that leaders support them and have taken steps to reduce their workload.

Leaders and teachers have worked hard to improve the curriculum. They have identified what they want pupils to know at certain points in their education. The curriculum helps pupils to learn things in a logical way. This helps them to remember key facts. Pupils enjoy learning a wide range of subjects. They also have many opportunities to learn important life skills. For example, pupils take part in debates and enjoy leading mass at

the local church. Pupils have a deep understanding of how they can be good citizens in the future and make the world a better place. They also appreciate the wide range of clubs that they can join. These include robotics, choir and many different sports.

Leaders have placed a high priority on the teaching of reading. Most pupils achieve at the expected standard in reading by the end of Year 6. Leaders have made sure that there is a wide selection of books for pupils to read and enjoy. Pupils read often in school and at home. They talk with enthusiasm about the books they have read and who their favourite authors are. They have developed a love of reading.

Children get off to a strong start in the early years. Staff have all received appropriate training to support children's learning. At the start of Nursery, children begin to learn phonics. Teachers are well trained in teaching phonics and they do this well. Extra help is given to pupils who need to catch up. The proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been above the national average for the last two years. However, sometimes pupils' reading books are not matched to the phonics that they have been learning. This slows down the progress that a minority of younger pupils make in learning to read.

The teaching of mathematics is a strength, and pupils achieve well. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They plan lessons well to build on pupils' prior learning. This helps pupils to develop their knowledge and skills. Teachers are quick to identify any pupils who need more support to catch up. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They see the importance of learning from their mistakes.

Leaders have made sure that the school's curriculum is interesting and challenging. However, there is some variation in how pupils' learning is planned across different subjects. English, mathematics and computing are planned well. Pupils make strong progress in these subjects. This is because teachers regularly check what pupils can do and use this information to plan future learning. However, in other subjects, planning does not always build on what pupils already know and can do in the same logical way. Discussions with pupils in these subjects showed that they struggled to remember some of their previous learning. Leaders are taking the necessary actions to improve assessment in all subjects, but this is at an early stage of development.

Across the school, pupils support and respect each other. Their behaviour is good, and disruption to learning is rare. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs met well. Teachers set the same high expectations as they do for all pupils. The curriculum has also been designed well for disadvantaged pupils. They achieve well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture around keeping children safe throughout the school and in the wider community. Leaders know their families well. They have established strong relationships with them and the local community. Leaders provide regular training for staff

and pupils. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about pupils' safety. Systems within the school are effective.

Leaders work well with other agencies to ensure that children and families get the support that they need. Pupils could explain how to keep themselves safe when they are in the community or when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment information well to inform pupils' future learning. As a result, pupils have gaps in their learning. Leaders need to ensure that the new assessment procedures become embedded, so that teachers use assessment well to improve the curriculum. This will ensure that pupils know and remember more in all subjects.
- Teachers give pupils reading books which are not always matched to their phonic knowledge. This means that pupils then find these books difficult to read. Teachers need to make sure that the books children read in school and take home are well matched to the phonics that pupils are learning in class. This will help to further develop pupils' early reading skills and their fluency.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 18–19 June 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

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If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	131884
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10087758
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tracy Weedon
Headteacher	Angela Shore
Website	www.st-annes-pri.manchester.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	18–19 June 2015

Information about this school

- This is a Roman Catholic primary school.
- The school has a before- and after-school club.
- The school had its most recent section 48 inspection, undertaken by the Diocese of Salford in February 2018.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. I spoke with members of the local governing body, a representative from the local authority, the headteacher, senior leaders and members of staff.
- I reviewed a range of documentation, including documentation about attendance, safeguarding and checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- I considered the 20 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View. I also considered the nine responses to the online staff survey and 12 responses to the pupil survey.
- I looked in depth at reading, mathematics and computing. This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of pupils’ work, discussions

with teachers, discussions with pupils and listening to pupils read.

Inspection team

Julie Barlow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Inspection of St John's RC Primary School

Chepstow Road, Chorlton-Cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 9SN

Inspection dates: 8–9 October 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to St John's. They have positive attitudes towards school and are friendly towards one another. The school richly deserves its status as a 'rights respecting' school. Pupils live the school's core values of love, joy, respect, gratitude, kindness and resilience.

Pupils know that the school is a safe place to be. Staff have excellent relationships with pupils. They are watchful and care for pupils well. Pupils work and play well together in a purposeful atmosphere. The pupils we spoke to told us that there is no bullying. Leaders are thorough in their approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well as a result.

There is a vast range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, which help to nurture pupils' individual talents. Pupils attend clubs such as comedy drama, violin and a wide range of sporting activities. Leaders ensure that there is something for everyone.

Parents and carers are happy with the school. Many commented on the positive changes that they have seen in recent years. Leaders and governors have high expectations for pupils. However, leaders and governors know that there is more to do to realise their ambitious vision for the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher has ensured that there is focus on developing the quality of education in the school. She has reinvigorated the ambition among staff.

Leaders have refreshed the school's curriculum. They are clear about what they would like pupils to achieve in each subject. Teachers make meaningful links between subjects to help pupils know and remember more. Pupils' recall of their learning is strong in many subjects, such as science and computing. However, there are some tweaks needed to consistently achieve their aims across all subjects, for example in Spanish. This is because many subject leaders are new to their roles. They have not had the opportunity to check regularly on the quality of education in their subjects to bring about the necessary improvements.

Leaders have put reading at the heart of the curriculum. Teachers choose interesting books so that pupils develop a love of reading. The books pupils read match the sounds that they learn. However, teachers' approach to the teaching of phonics between different year groups is disjointed. Some less able pupils repeat learning from the previous year when they are capable of moving on more quickly. Despite this, pupils progress well to become confident and fluent readers as they move through key stage 1. By the time they leave the school, pupils achieve well in reading compared to other pupils nationally.

In writing and mathematics, pupils' knowledge and skills are developed well.

Teachers clearly explain to pupils how to be successful in their writing. This enables pupils to write confidently and for different reasons in Years 5 and 6. However, teachers do not always expect younger pupils to have high standards in their handwriting and spelling. Leaders are aware of this, and their actions have ensured that this is improving in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4. In mathematics, pupils have opportunities to solve problems to deepen their understanding. By the time they leave the school, pupils' attainment in mathematics is often higher than that of pupils nationally.

Teachers are aware of the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, some pupils take part in meditation to ensure a calm start to the day. Staff have received specific training to understand pupils' needs well. As a result, these pupils achieve well.

In the early years, children write words and simple phrases from an early stage. They quickly grasp the sequence of numbers up to 10 before moving on to more complicated work. However, children's control of a pencil means that their work is sometimes untidy. Children explore their well-resourced learning activities with enthusiasm. Their achievement is typically above that of other pupils nationally.

There is an exceptional programme of additional activities, such as residential trips, for all key stage 2 pupils. For example, Year 5 pupils take part in a Spanish exchange visit. The school has received awards due to the successful promotion of physical education and sport. The strong personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils' behaviour is respectful. This helps them to learn from each other. Older pupils especially enjoy their debates, for example on pollution. They enjoy listening to others' opinions and points of view.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular training, so they know how to keep pupils safe. Staff know pupils well. They are well placed to notice any signs of abuse. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They have a good awareness of online safety and the steps that they need to take to protect their privacy. The headteacher has ensured that the needs of vulnerable pupils are met well. Parents say that they can approach the school if they need help and that their concerns will be acted upon.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- It is clear from leaders' actions that they have taken great strides to improve the school's curriculum. However, there is a lack of consistency in the quality of education in some subjects. Senior leaders should ensure that subject leaders

check on the quality of education in their subjects more regularly. Subject leaders should make sure that the quality of the curriculum is consistently strong in all subjects and year groups. Senior leaders have identified this and are in the process of bringing this about to realise their intent for the curriculum. Ofsted's transition arrangements were taken into account on this inspection.

- For the lowest-ability pupils, leaders should make sure that there is a more seamless transition between the phonics work completed in different year groups. Although pupils revise sounds they have already learned, this could be completed more quickly. These pupils should also have more opportunities to practise the sounds they already know before moving on to learning new sounds. This will help lower-ability pupils to develop their phonics knowledge more successfully.
- In the early years, teachers should support children to develop their fine motor skills more widely. This will ensure that children learn to write neatly and will set the foundations for better handwriting in key stage 1 and beyond.

How can I feed back my views?

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School details

Unique reference number	105546
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10110167
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	433
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Father P. McMahon
Headteacher	B. O'Donoghue
Website	www.stjohnsrc.net
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2006

Information about this school

- A new headteacher and assistant headteacher were appointed in 2017. Since the last inspection, almost all teachers are new to the school.
- St John's is a Roman Catholic school. The school's last section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character took place in May 2018.
- The governing body runs before- and after-school provision on the school site.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We met with the headteacher, senior leadership team and subject leaders throughout the inspection.
- We spoke with representatives from Manchester local authority and from Salford archdiocese.
- We met with groups of pupils from across the school, both formally and informally, to ask them about safeguarding. We also met with the headteacher, governors, teachers and teaching assistants. We reviewed documentation which

included the school's safeguarding policy, the register of checks carried out on new employees and safeguarding records.

- We looked at the school's behaviour records, observed pupils at breaktimes and discussed behaviour and bullying with pupils.
- We spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- We considered reading, writing, science and PSHE as part of this inspection. For these subjects, we spoke with the headteacher, met with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils, undertook an analysis of pupils' work and visited lessons. We heard pupils read. We also spoke to key stage 2 pupils about their work across the curriculum.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joan Williamson

Ofsted Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Ofsted Inspector

Gill Burrow

Ofsted Inspector

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12 December 2019

Ms Maureen Scott
Varna Community Primary School
Chisholm Street
Openshaw
Manchester
M11 2LE

Dear Ms Scott

No formal designation inspection of Varna Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 26 November 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. The findings do not change the overall effectiveness judgement of outstanding from the last section 5 inspection.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for a no formal designation inspection of schools. The inspection was carried out to enable Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to better understand the quality of education in specific subjects provided by outstanding primary schools.

Main findings

Languages provision has a high priority at your school. Pupils learn Spanish from Year 1 and continue with this language throughout key stage 2. All pupils have a weekly 45-minute Spanish lesson with a specialist teacher. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In addition, some pupils study French in Year 6. You and your staff make sure that the wide range of languages that pupils speak at home is celebrated. You use displays and assemblies to highlight the importance of learning a language. Pupils are interested in languages and many perform short plays in Spanish at special events.

For the most part, the Spanish curriculum is ambitious. In some ways it exceeds the subject content of the national curriculum. Nationally, pupils are expected to start learning languages in Year 3. At your school, pupils start to study Spanish in Year 1. There is a strong focus on vocabulary in the curriculum. The specialist teacher revisits vocabulary regularly to help to ensure that pupils retain Spanish words in their memory. Similarly, the teacher practises simple questions and answers with pupils each lesson. Pupils can answer these rehearsed questions about themselves and their families with ease.

Pupils are taught to understand the links between how Spanish words are written and how they are pronounced. This is done systematically. The teacher then reminds pupils of these links when meeting new pieces of vocabulary. Pupils have a strong understanding of how to pronounce Spanish words.

Over their time at school, pupils are exposed to more complex reading texts in Spanish. The Spanish that they produce also increases in complexity. They begin to write longer sentences by adding connectives, for example. Pupils' bank of vocabulary increases. They can alter simple sentences to express themselves. As a result, pupils' achievement is relatively strong in Spanish by the time that they leave school. Pupils are well prepared to study languages in secondary school. This includes disadvantaged pupils.

There is a lack of precision in curriculum planning as far as grammar is concerned. Too little attention is given to ensuring that all pupils fully understand the basic building blocks of the language. Grammatical concepts are covered incidentally and are driven by the topic being studied. Pupils do understand some aspects of Spanish grammar. Pupils can explain the concept of gender and explain how adjectives agree with the noun, for example. Yet, coverage of grammatical concepts is not planned strategically. Pupils tend, therefore, to rely on learning set phrases and altering individual words to say what they want.

Your specialist teacher uses assessment effectively to check how well pupils have learned vocabulary and how well they understand simple texts in Spanish. She understands the need for pupils to develop both their understanding and their production of spoken and written Spanish. She uses a variety of resources, tasks and strategies to implement the curriculum. For example, she understands the step-by-step approach needed when introducing new vocabulary.

You and your senior team are committed to languages. You have all completed beginners courses in Spanish to help you to understand the specific nature of the subject. This has helped you to quality assure the curriculum and its delivery. You already have links with the languages department in a local secondary school to support you in further improving how well Spanish is delivered at your school.

Evidence

I met with you, the assistant headteacher with responsibility for curriculum, and the specialist teacher of Spanish. I visited lessons in Years 2, 4 and 6 and spoke to pupils from these lessons about their work in Spanish. I looked at a selection of pupils' work from the lessons that I visited with the assistant headteacher and the specialist teacher of Spanish. I visited the Spanish drama club at lunchtime. I evaluated the curriculum plans for Spanish and policies for languages.

Context

Varna Community Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are currently 469 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. Many pupils are bilingual or multilingual. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is above average. The school has an average proportion of pupils with SEND, including pupils with education, health and care plans.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Wardle

Her Majesty's Inspector

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