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Mr Ashley Martin
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Martin

Short inspection of Heddington Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 24 April 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 January 2014.

This school continues to be good.

Leaders and governors have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As headteacher, you exude a passion for the school. You hold high expectations for all members of the school's community, but also recognise the importance of maintaining the well-being of your staff. Staff value your support, as well as your investment in their professional development. It was clear during my visit that one of the key strengths of the school is the dedication of your staff and the emphasis you place on being part of a team. As one member of staff wrote in their questionnaire, you 'lead by example'.

Along with yourself, teachers, teaching assistants and governors know the school very well. There is a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the areas requiring further improvement. Your self-evaluation is accurate and this is informing the school's development plans. Actions are outlined clearly, with success being measured in terms of the impact these actions have on raising pupils' outcomes. Effective leadership and management, combined with high-quality teaching, learning and assessment, is leading to pupils making strong progress from their starting points. This is particularly the case for pupils working below the expectations for their age, including those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Rapid rates of progress are enabling many of these pupils to catch up with their peers.

Governors are an integral part of the school community. They have an in-depth understanding of pupils and their families. You provide them with a range of information about the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Governors check this information

through their regular visits to the school, as well as from the information they receive through external monitoring. Governors recognise, however, that at the time of my visit some of the information on the school's website did not meet statutory guidance for what schools should publish online.

Pupils and parents are extremely positive about the school. They describe the school as being 'one big happy family, where everyone knows everyone'. Pupils enjoy their learning, saying that lessons are 'challenging but fun'. Pupils and parents appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular clubs on offer. For example, as well as a number of sports clubs, pupils talked enthusiastically about junk modelling, cooking and homework clubs. As one pupil told me, 'There is something for everyone.'

At the previous inspection, the school was asked to further develop the quality of teaching so that it provided pupils with sufficient opportunities to make use of what they had learned and try new skills. You told me how you have continued to raise teachers' expectations in line with the greater demands of the national curriculum. This has proved effective in ensuring that high proportions of pupils across the school are working within the expectations for their age. You have also ensured that a strong curriculum is providing pupils with opportunities to develop their skills in a wide range of subjects.

The second area identified at the previous inspection was to further develop the role of subject leaders. Action plans demonstrate that leaders have a secure understanding of their subjects and the aspects which require further development. Focused professional development has included the opportunity to share best practice with schools across the Calne Area Partnership. This has raised subject leaders' understanding of assessment information and how they can use their monitoring to demonstrate the impact their actions are having on pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding is effective.

Staff and governors know the school's pupils and their families extremely well. There is a strong sense of community and everyone understands their role in keeping children safe. Pupils are happy in school and all of the pupils who spoke with me, or completed the online survey, said they felt safe in school. Pupils also feel well cared for. As one pupil told me, 'If there was something wrong, my teacher would just know. They understand me and know my personality.'

Pupils say that bullying is rare but are confident that, if they did have a concern, they could talk to you or another member of staff and it would be sorted out for them. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe online. They know not to share personal information with anyone that they do not know in the 'real world'.

As the designated leader for safeguarding, you have a strong understanding of the vulnerabilities that pupils face. Along with your highly skilled special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), you are proactive in providing targeted support. This is proving effective in meeting the social, emotional and mental health needs of pupils and parents, as well as in addressing other barriers that pupils face in their learning.

The school's checks to ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers are thorough and recorded in line with statutory guidance. Governors keep a watchful eye on the school's procedures to ensure that they are in keeping with agreed school policy. You have ensured that staff training is kept up to date and have established systems for sharing best practice and case studies with other schools in the Calne Area Partnership.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the day, we agreed the main areas of focus for the inspection. Firstly, we considered the impact of leaders' actions in ensuring that in mathematics teaching is enabling pupils to make strong progress from their different starting points. This was because published assessment information for 2017 indicated that at the end of Year 6, not all pupils had made the progress expected of them from their starting points. Additionally, at the end of Year 2, no pupils were assessed as working at greater depth.
- Your self-evaluation demonstrates that you have already identified providing greater challenge for your most able pupils as a priority. This is being achieved by developing teachers' understanding of mastery. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their fluency and apply their mathematical skills across a range of contexts. For example, in one lesson pupils were using their knowledge of different calculation strategies to deepen their understanding of Roman numerals. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that pupils, including the most able, are making good progress from their starting points.
- Our second line of enquiry was to evaluate the teaching of spelling, grammar and punctuation in key stage 2. We also agreed to look at how pupils are applying their knowledge and skills in their independent writing. In 2017, published assessment information showed that pupils' attainment, especially at the higher standards, was below the national average. Similarly, the school's average spelling scores were below those seen nationally.
- The teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar is good. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and, as a result, pupils display an understanding appropriate to their age. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils use a range of language features in their writing and were able to talk to me about relative clauses and the use of the active and passive voice. In another lesson, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were working with sentences written in the past and present tenses. They were confident in explaining to me the difference between the past progressive and the present perfect.
- Work in pupils' books shows that they are able to apply this knowledge of punctuation and grammar in their written work. However, you recognise that opportunities for pupils to practise their skills across a range of subjects – for example science, geography and history – are more limited.
- In our evaluation of pupils' writing books, we also discussed the impact that teachers' planning and feedback is having in developing pupils' writing skills. We agreed that, at times, planned learning intentions lack precision. For example, in one lesson pupils were asked to 'use a range of punctuation accurately'. However, there was no reference to the exact types of punctuation those pupils needed to use in order to meet the expectations for their year group. This lack of detail is slowing pupils' progress, especially for those working at greater depth. In addition, books show that pupils do not routinely build upon

their mistakes to strengthen their understanding and skills.

- Our next inspection trail was to consider the effectiveness of early years provision in enabling the most able children to make strong progress from their starting points. In 2017, published assessment information for the end of the Reception Year showed that no children were assessed as exceeding the writing or mathematics early learning goals. I wanted to check whether, in the current early years cohort, the most able children are being challenged to make the strongest possible progress.
- The class teacher, who is also the early years leader, exhibits high expectations. She has a secure understanding of children's needs and the early years curriculum. She has established an environment which is vibrant and exciting. Children enjoy their learning and engage fully in activities which develop their skills across all areas of learning. As a result, children make good progress from their entry points into school.
- We agreed, however, that the most able children are capable of making even greater progress. In both adult-led and independent activities, adults are not providing the most able children with sufficient levels of challenge. Similarly, not all adults use questioning effectively to probe children's understanding and deepen their learning. This is limiting children's opportunities to demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding above that typically expected for their age.
- Finally, we agreed to look at the impact that additional funding is having on the outcomes of eligible pupils. This was because the information that governors have published on the website does not meet statutory guidance. It was clear from our conversations that you have an in-depth understanding of all of your pupils and, in particular, those who are the most vulnerable. You have targeted funds to supporting pupils' academic, pastoral and, where appropriate, emotional and mental health needs. Inspection evidence demonstrates that pupils who are eligible for additional funding are making progress which is at least in line with other pupils nationally with similar starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching enables greater proportions of pupils to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills above the expectations for their age
- adults use questioning to consistently challenge pupils and deepen their understanding
- teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to apply their writing skills across a range of different contexts and subjects
- governors establish effective systems to monitor the school's website and ensure that it meets statutory guidance for what schools must publish online.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Dyer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and your SENCo. We discussed the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements made since the previous inspection. Together, we observed pupils in classrooms and spoke with them about their learning. We analysed work in pupils' books from across the curriculum.

I had meetings with members of staff and five governors, including the chair of the governing body. I also spoke with a representative from the local authority. I looked at a range of written evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding and attendance. I spoke with parents at the end of the school day. I took account of the views expressed by 36 parents who completed the online survey, as well as their written comments. I also considered the views of staff and pupils who returned their questionnaires.