

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



27 January 2016

Mr Paul Bryant
Headteacher
William Westley Church of England VC Primary School
Mill Lane
Whittlesford
Cambridge
CB22 4NE

Dear Mr Bryant

Short inspection of William Westley Church of England VC Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 January 2016, 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 2011.

This school continues to be good.

Since the last inspection, the leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school.

You communicate a very clear vision which is palpable throughout the school. Everyone is committed to continuing to improve and build on the school's success. Your effective, decisive leadership is valued highly by pupils, governors, parents and staff. This contributes to the strong relationships seen throughout the school. All staff have a clear sense of purpose and share your commitment to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

There have been a number of changes since the last inspection. You have successfully managed the absence of experienced members of staff. It is to your credit that you have spotted and nurtured middle leaders to carry out key roles in the last year. Several of the middle and senior leaders are relatively new to their roles. They are enthusiastic and committed and have stepped up well to fulfil their responsibilities. With your good support, the transition to these new roles has been smooth, enabling you all to have an accurate view of the school. As a result, and since the last inspection, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has continued to be at least in line with the national average. Children are also achieving well in the Reception Year. The school continues to grow and now has a waiting list of children whose parents wish them to attend the early years provision.

At the last inspection, inspectors commended the school for its outstanding provision in the early years, pupils' behaviour and their safety. Inspectors also recognised that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils was outstanding. The school's motto, 'children at the heart of our school; our school at the heart of the community' is evident in all that the school does and is driven through a creative curriculum. It is recognised by staff and parents that pupils are very well supported. The considerable number of responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, clearly demonstrate the strong relationship you have developed with parents. One commented, 'There is such a warm and caring atmosphere at the school. The level of care, kindness and respect is what I really value.'

You and your governors have been committed to improving the areas identified at the last inspection and, as a result, they have been tackled successfully. Leaders have an accurate view of all pupils through a developing tracking system. Teachers plan well to ensure that pupils know what they are learning and the next steps they need to take. You are pleased with the impact you have seen since you introduced the school's feedback and response policy. Pupils say this has helped them to improve their work and this is clear in the variety of books we looked at together.

Good teaching means that increasing proportions of pupils make good progress. You and your staff have worked hard to ensure that assessments are accurate and teachers know their pupils well. The introduction of 'learning ladders' has been very positive. Pupils know their next steps in learning well and animatedly told me what they still 'want to get better at'. Parents feel much more able to support their children's learning at home because pupils' targets are clear and progress is communicated well. All of the school's work has been shared comprehensively with the governing body. Individual governors are linked to subjects or priorities in the school's plan for improvement and are actively involved in checking the progress that is being made. Leaders are aware, however, that a few areas of the school are not as strong as you would wish. For example, although it is a small number in the school, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in mathematics lags behind their progress in reading and writing. There is also some unevenness in pupils' progress in writing, particularly for most-able pupils.

The curriculum develops pupils' understanding of the need to eat healthily and to exercise regularly. Teachers plan learning in science, physical education, personal, social health and economic education, and mathematics that supports pupils' knowledge and understanding in this area. You have actively sought and engaged a new provider of school meals. The number of pupils taking a school lunch has now increased and the salad bar is proving to be a popular choice for a growing number of pupils. Healthy snacks are also provided for younger pupils and activities planned during snack time are enhancing pupils' awareness of how these foods can help them to be fit and healthy. The additional sports funding has also been used well to continue to widen the sports activities that are available to pupils. The number of pupils attending sport-related after-school clubs has increased considerably.

You and your governors regularly check on the quality of teaching in the school and have recognised some outstanding practice. Senior leaders have also supported individual colleagues to improve their practice when the need is identified. This has helped to establish a team which has high expectations and aspirations at the heart of its work. As one teacher put it, 'It would be difficult to find a more supportive environment in which to work. The staff support and challenge each other and the children in their care.' The introduction of the new curriculum and the school's chosen assessment system have been challenging for staff. However, with your leadership and support both aspects are developing well. You have worked with other schools to ensure that teachers are making secure judgements about pupils' learning and have a clear understanding of what is expected in the new curriculum.

Safeguarding is effective.

You place the highest priority on keeping pupils safe. Leaders and governors have invested considerable time in ensuring that current safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are of high quality. The recent audit that governors undertook evidenced that your systems for checking on all aspects of safeguarding are robust and thorough. Parents expressed confidence in the school to follow up any concerns, and the overwhelming majority of parents agree that the school keeps pupils safe and secure. Governors and leaders have undertaken training to ensure that they recruit appropriate and suitable staff, and a member of the governing body is always part of any staff interview processes.

Pupils say they feel safe and if they have any worries they know whom to go to for help. You have provided regular training to ensure that staff understand how to identify and report concerns effectively. Pupils play well together, respect each other and adhere to the school's rules. The school's records indicate that any issues are followed up promptly and extensively. Your desire to deal with any concerns quickly and personally 'at the school gate' is appreciated by parents and staff alike. Any pupil's absence is followed up quickly with particular attention paid to pupils whose attendance falls below 92%.

Inspection findings

- The new and developing assessment system and pupils' progress meetings have enabled you to identify any underachievement. Teachers' yearly targets for improvement focus their attention well on these pupils to accelerate their learning. Leaders are keeping a close eye to ensure that teachers across the school are planning learning which directly relates to regular, rigorous and ongoing assessment. However, leaders are aware that the transition to the new system will continue to need regular checking so that governors have an accurate picture of pupils' achievement.

- The proportion of pupils currently in the school who are making more than the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics is increasing. Good progress for most-able pupils is not yet as evident in all classes, particularly in writing. The progress of disadvantaged pupils in mathematics lags behind their progress in reading and writing. Achievement of boys in the foundation stage lags behind girls', but leaders are ensuring that the provision is regularly reshaped when gaps in particular areas, like writing, become apparent.
- Staff inspire pupils with their energetic and enthusiastic teaching. Teachers plan a range of interesting learning opportunities for all pupils. As a result of this, pupils say they enjoy learning in this 'exhilarating, exciting, friendly' school. Trips and visitors regularly enhance the daily curriculum. Pupils are particularly looking forward to the yearly theatre visit to London to see *The Lion King*. Visits to the Tower of London, an Anglo-Saxon village and Grafham Water keep the curriculum 'hands on'. Leaders have been clear that while they value academic excellence the curriculum must always be inviting and creative. Teachers and pupils alike welcome this approach. Pupils eagerly talk about such activities as the 'Make do and mend day' in which they brought in old clothes and made new ones based on a Second World War theme. All of the school's daily work is peppered with references to its strong moral and social foundation.
- You have accurately identified key priorities for the school and are taking action to tackle them. For example, you are continuing to develop middle and senior leaders so that there is further capacity to improve. You are particularly adept at identifying staff's strengths and nurturing these to the benefit of all. For example, you have appointed from within the school less experienced leaders whom you have guided and to whom you have delegated various responsibilities. They are now in a stronger position to drive whole-school improvement, as was evident during this inspection.
- You have established good links with your cluster of schools and the local secondary school. This is not only to secure effective and smooth transition for pupils, but also to ensure that you remain in constant touch with changes in curriculum and assessment. Your willingness to work with others, including Cambridge University, to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills and ultimately improve outcomes for pupils, is paying dividends.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the school's new assessment system provides secure and accurate information that identifies any underachievement
- leaders check regularly on the planning for and progress of disadvantaged pupils in mathematics
- teachers in all classes provide more challenging activities for most-able pupils so they make as much progress as they can in writing.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Ely, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Brock
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, other senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and five other governors. I also spoke with a representative from the local authority. I visited a number of classes to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. I met with a group of pupils and spoke with many others during lessons and break times. A senior leader, the special educational needs coordinator and I looked together at recent information about pupils' progress, and I reviewed case studies of disadvantaged pupils. A senior leader and I looked at pupils' work in a variety of books. I reviewed records about keeping pupils safe and about attendance. I also examined a wide range of other documents, including those relating to the school's self-evaluation, development plans and your own checks on the school's work. Views of 103 parents from the online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered, as were the views of 24 staff and 75 pupils who completed Ofsted's questionnaires.