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Mrs Allison Underhill  
Headteacher  
St Andrew's Church of England Infant School  
Church Lane  
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Coventry  
CV5 7BX

Dear Mrs Underhill

### **Short inspection of St Andrew's Church of England Infant School**

Following my visit to the school on 27 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 June 2011.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. It is to your credit that you have done so while also managing significant changes to staffing.

You are uncompromising in your drive for the best quality of teaching in all classes. You have established a culture of continual improvement in the school. Governors and staff share this vision and value your leadership. Parents speak highly of the school and see it as 'part of the community'. They appreciate the way that staff know and value each individual child. Comments include, 'St Andrew's is a very nurturing school – the headteacher and staff work tirelessly to make sure that every child is cared for and allowed to grow'.

You have established a climate of professional learning among the staff. You ensure that teachers have every opportunity to learn from each other and from outstanding practice in other schools. Teachers are thoughtful and reflective about the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. They are proud of the school. Comments include, 'regular achievement meetings help us to keep focused on improving our teaching. We want every child to be the best that they can be, in their learning and social and emotional well-being'. This shows the kind and caring atmosphere in and around the school at all levels.

At the last inspection, inspectors identified a need to ensure that subject leaders are involved in the drive to support and improve the quality of teaching. You have used every opportunity to address this effectively. The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has identified correct priorities for improvement in early years. She is taking appropriate actions to address them. This has revitalised teaching and assessment practices in Reception classes. Staff are becoming more effective at recognising what children already know and can do. They are better at recognising the 'next steps' in children's learning. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development improved in 2015. You recognise that there is more work to be done to continue this improvement.

Your actions to address weaknesses in the teaching of early reading and phonics (the sounds that letters represent) have been swift and are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Your records, and the 2015 phonics screening check, showed that more pupils are reaching the expected standards. Leaders are not complacent and this continues to be a school priority.

School records and external assessments show that more pupils are reaching the higher levels in mathematics by the end of Year 2. Leaders recognise that the new National Curriculum has further raised expectations in mathematics and that teachers need to develop their skills to meet the demands. You have appointed a new subject leader for mathematics, who has rightly identified areas where improvement is most needed. She is well equipped to support staff. She is working effectively with teachers to continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics.

You have made considerable strides in the other areas for improvement. The new and redefined leadership roles at all levels mean that monitoring and evaluation systems have been sharpened. Leaders hold regular achievement team meetings with teachers. Pupils' achievement is tracked diligently. Leaders make sure that information is used quickly to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. All leaders contribute to the accurate evaluation of the quality of teaching.

The curriculum is engaging and offers many opportunities for pupils to create and explore topics of interest. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 were making clay pots and effectively developing their understanding of how art and design reflect history. Children in the Reception Year were eager to share their learning about the international space station and the solar system. They are proud of the stars and constellations that they have created in the classroom planetarium. Children make good progress and develop a love of learning as a result of these activities.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils' safety is of paramount importance to everyone at the school. The leadership team ensures that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Appropriate checks are carried out on all staff, governors and volunteers, and comprehensive risk assessments have been completed. The deputy headteacher leads weekly meetings effectively, where time is

dedicated to safeguarding updates. Records show that necessary actions are taken without delay.

All staff receive appropriate training about safeguarding and know what they should do if they have any concerns.

Governors regularly attend safeguarding training. They say that this 'raises our awareness and gives us the shared understanding and language to talk about our safeguarding duties'. Leaders have recently attended training in keeping pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism. As a result, governors have issued new guidance for staff about this specific aspect of safeguarding.

Pupils behave sensibly around the school. They say that they feel extremely safe and secure in all parts of the school and the school grounds. Pupils, including very young children, said that they know who to go to if they feel worried or unhappy. They say that there is no bullying in their school and there was no evidence to the contrary. Parents agree that the school is a safe place for their children.

## **Inspection findings**

- Leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need further development. The school's improvement plans focus on appropriate priorities. For example, you have identified that some groups of pupils are not developing confidence and mental fluency in mathematics.
- Governors have provided funding for new resources to support phonics teaching. Early reading books have been updated. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check increased in 2015 but remained below the national average. Leaders recognise that there is further work to be done and are tackling this effectively.
- In 2015, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was broadly in line with the national average. This was an improvement on 2014.
- Outcomes at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015 remained significantly above those seen nationally in writing and reading. In mathematics, outcomes were broadly in line with those seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in mathematics has increased. The new subject leader for mathematics has identified where gaps in pupils' learning may be emerging. She has rightly identified that more opportunities are needed for pupils to deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts. She is providing effective support and challenge for teachers to address this.

- Governors are committed to the school and have a good range of skills and expertise. They are well informed about the school's priorities and are rigorous in their challenge and support for leaders. Finances are managed effectively to ensure value for money.
- Leaders and governors have worked hard and successfully to ensure that parents can contribute to the life of the school. Workshops have been provided for parents on topics such as assessment and early reading. Parent Panel meetings take place twice termly. These provide opportunities for parents to work with senior leaders and governors on current issues and future planned improvements. Governors work hard to gather the views of parents, so that they are taken into account when updating school improvement plans.
- Leaders have recently refined how they provide support for the small numbers of disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who are eligible for this funding have detailed, individual plans. Additional help is carefully tailored to need. The deputy headteacher and the learning mentor work closely with teachers to monitor the achievement of these pupils diligently. As a result, these pupils make good or better progress from their different starting points.
- The deputy headteacher leads the inclusion team effectively. Pupils' needs are swiftly and accurately identified. Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support and ensure that pupils have appropriate resources to help their learning. School records show that these pupils make at least good progress. Parents appreciate the care and support provided by the staff. Comments include, 'We couldn't ask for more. The school goes the extra mile to make sure that our daughter makes good progress and is happy and well cared for'.
- Your robust focus on improving the quality and standards of provision in early years has raised expectations. Staff observe children's learning carefully and use information to provide children with challenging activities that take their learning forward. You recognise that further work is needed to secure these improvements.
- You have developed a number of fruitful partnerships with leaders and schools in the local school partnership, Network 10. Participation in this network allows you and teachers to benefit from joint training, to check the accuracy of teachers' assessment of children's learning and to learn from good practice.

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

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check continues to rise
- the robust focus on improving the quality and standards of provision in early years is sustained so that more children reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year
- teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills so that they develop confidence and fluency.

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

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Mottram  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I held meetings with you, senior leaders, teachers, a representative from the local authority and six governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. You accompanied me on visits to all classes. I spoke to pupils in classrooms and around the school and met with a group of pupils. I examined and discussed a range of documentation, including samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. We discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I considered the views of 21 parents who wrote to me during the inspection and 55 parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I spoke to parents and grandparents at the end of the school day.