

19 October 2015

Mrs G Clark  
Headteacher  
Newton Tony Church of England VC School  
Newton Tony  
Salisbury  
Wiltshire  
SP4 0HF

Dear Mrs Clark

### **Short inspection of Newton Tony Church of England VC School**

Following my visit to the school on 22 September 2015 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 February 2011.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

- You, your team and the governors know the school well. You continue to build on the school's strengths and have successfully tackled the areas that were identified as needing improvement at the last inspection. You have a strong team who share your high aspirations. Like you, they are passionate about the quality of education they provide.
- The last inspection report identified the need to improve outcomes for children in the early years. Through providing high-quality support and challenge to staff, outcomes for children in the early years have risen significantly. This is evident in the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of each Reception Year. This ensures they are well prepared for Year 1.
- The quality of the governing body has improved, which allows governors to hold leaders more rigorously to account. Through effective training, they ensure they have the skills to fulfil their duties. They keep themselves well informed of educational changes to make certain that school policies are compliant with current legislation. For example, they have a clear understanding of safeguarding and the potential risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. They have implemented a strategic plan for the school. While they are aware this plan needs refining in order to enable governors to check progress against key priorities, it demonstrates that governors have a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors are committed to keeping pupils safe. There is a robust culture of safeguarding, which is embedded across the school. The school works efficiently with other agencies to ensure the safety of pupils both in and beyond the school environment. Staff receive regular and high-quality safeguarding training to keep them well informed on all types of risk to children. Leaders carefully evaluate the risks involved with an activity, such as when pupils walk from the school to the village facilities. Pupils are confident they can share any concerns they may have with an adult, and report that their school is a safe place to be.

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of good quality.

## **Inspection findings**

- You have high aspirations and are passionate for all pupils to be successful; your staff share your ambition for the school. You have tackled complacency by introducing focused monitoring of teaching and developing a culture where teachers discuss what works in the classroom.
- Parents, staff and pupils speak highly of your leadership. The strengths identified in the last inspection remain. Pupils continue to make strong progress. Pupils form positive relationships with adults and each other. A strong family atmosphere exists throughout the school. This was exemplified during a tennis lesson, when an older pupil intervened with a quiet word to ensure that a younger child listened politely. All pupils take pride in conforming to the highest expectations of behaviour and courtesy.
- In this small school, all teachers take on leadership responsibilities. They work effectively together to provide the very best education for all pupils. Teachers accurately identify areas of weakness and agree actions to bring about rapid improvement. For example, the standards pupils reach in their knowledge of phonics has improved significantly because of better planning and teaching of letters and sounds. This was confirmed by higher results in the most recent Year 1 phonics check. Teachers plan interesting lessons which excite and motivate pupils. Curriculum planning takes account of pupils' individual needs and interests. Pupils are enthusiastic and make good progress as the curriculum meets their needs well. Teachers adapt their teaching and routines to ensure that learning does not stall.
- Leaders' evaluation accurately identifies the areas the school needs to improve. In particular, teachers acknowledge that the quality of writing across all subjects is not as good as it could be. However, there is clear evidence of leaders taking effective action to bring about improvement in writing. Work in pupils' books

demonstrates the positive impact of this action, and standards are rising across the school.

- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the care and education their children receive, a typical comment being, 'This is a brilliant school, and I wouldn't send my children to any other.' Parents fully appreciate the high level of communication between school and home. This was exemplified in the recent planned absence of the headteacher. Parents were kept informed as to the arrangements that governors made to secure the leadership at this time. Consequently, the transition was seamless and pupils' education did not falter. Parents whose children have just started in Reception spoke positively about the school's induction arrangements. They welcome the school's flexibility in these arrangements, which has resulted in their children settling quickly into school.
- Pupils are very happy to come to school and this is reflected in their regular and improving attendance. They say it is a very happy and caring place. They feel safe, well supported and enjoy their learning. Pupils listen attentively and contribute confidently in lessons. For example, Year 1 pupils performed an action poem with confidence, to demonstrate their good speaking and listening skills. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning and the many varied activities in which they participate. They welcome their teachers' feedback to help them to improve their learning. They work hard during their lessons. Pupils have a deep understanding of life in modern Britain. They speak enthusiastically about the 'enterprise challenges' and the contribution they make to improvements at the school. Equality of opportunity is embedded in all aspects of the school. Teachers have high expectations of each individual pupil. Pupils who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs are provided with personalised support which builds their confidence and develops self-esteem.
- Although this is a small school, pupils have access to a rich and diverse range of extra activities, ranging from tennis to calligraphy club (set up at the request of the school council). This supports their personal development and well-being to great effect.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- effective leadership of teaching remains a priority so that more pupils make outstanding progress, particularly in writing
- their improvement plans clearly indicate how and when leaders and governors will check that the actions that have been taken have improved outcomes.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Wiltshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jen Southall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, your staff, governors and the acting headteacher who led the school during your planned absence. I had a telephone conversation with an officer from the local authority. Together, you and I visited each class to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. I spoke with parents at the start of the day to listen to their views about the school. I had conversations with pupils throughout the day and observed their behaviour during lunchtime. I evaluated the accuracy of your school self-evaluation as part of the inspection, along with other documentation. I checked the effectiveness of your safeguarding arrangements and, also, your work to ensure the regular attendance and punctuality of your pupils. I considered the views of staff who I spoke to during the inspection.