

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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



31 March 2016

Mr P Jones and Mrs S McCarthy-Patmore
Executive Headteacher and Head of Teaching and Learning
Aveton Gifford Church of England Primary School
Fore Street
Aveton Gifford
Kingsbridge
Devon
TQ7 4LB

Dear Mr Jones and Mrs McCarthy-Patmore

Short inspection of Aveton Gifford Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 23 February 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in May 2012.

This school continues to be good.

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

In becoming an academy within the First Federation Trust, the school has benefited from sharing resources and expertise with the eight other schools within the multi-academy trust. This includes effective staff training and development from the teaching school. Staff are appointed to the federation and over time they gain experience of working in different types of school. This has helped the small school of Aveton Gifford to recruit and retain good-calibre staff.

The trust's board of directors and executive headteacher are ensuring the effective deployment of staff and resources, staff conduct, maintenance of buildings and implementation of statutory responsibilities. This enables the head of teaching and learning to focus on developing the staff, most of whom are relatively new to teaching. Supported by the trust's clear expectations of teaching and learning, known as 'internal consistencies', the head of teaching and learning is securing consistently high-quality teaching. This results in pupils' achievement in the mixed-age classes continuing to rise, including in the early years.

The school has retained its distinctive and strong Christian ethos and community involvement. This contributes to the excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Pupils are eager to take responsibility, for example through the ethos committee, and they support each other exceptionally well. Parents appreciate the values their children develop. Many of the written comments submitted alongside, Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, referred to the caring and supportive ethos of the school and praised the way in which pupils are taught to respect and care for each other. Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare continue to be especially strong features of the school.

The school continues to make progress on the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection, within the context of staff changes. Pupils are now making better progress in Key Stage 1 and the trend in their attainment over the past three years is above average overall. Across the school, progress in reading and writing continues to be good. Pupils make expected progress in mathematics, but not enough of the most-able pupils make more than expected progress. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability all make at least expected progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The safeguarding policy is up to date and includes the Department for Education's requirements in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. The federation and school leaders have identified the need to review the policy and staff training more systematically. Together with the administration staff, they have ensured that procedures meet the requirements for safer recruitment. All required checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are carried out and recorded well. Staff can explain the school's policy and procedures for child protection and they have received training in preventing the radicalisation of pupils. Procedures for identifying pupils who may be at risk of any harm are carried out, recorded and followed up appropriately. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and they can explain how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.

Inspection findings

- The federation's aim to provide an exciting and purposeful curriculum and an engaging and vibrant learning environment is evident in the school. Pupils enjoy the enquiry approach to learning and they make good use of the outdoor area. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 eagerly collected leaves from the grounds and investigated the average size. They plotted this on graphs and presented their findings to the class, demonstrating good understanding.

- The federation's policies, procedures and systems support the school's improvement well. The executive headteacher monitors and evaluates the progress of pupils through a comprehensive information system, and holds the head of teaching and learning to account for the progress in regular meetings. The head of teaching and learning monitors and evaluates pupils' progress rigorously through assessment information, lesson observations and regular engagement of staff in checking pupils' books. Books are often checked by teachers across the federation of schools to ensure the accuracy of their assessments. The procedures ensure that self-evaluation is accurate and used to inform the right priorities in the school improvement plan.
- Weekly standards and progress meetings, which the head of teaching and learning holds with the staff, result in appropriate intervention being put into place for any underachieving pupils.
- The head of teaching and learning, together with class teachers, is responsible for subject development. She has introduced a week of practical activities that focus on mathematics, which is called a 'messy maths week', to provide pupils with more opportunities to apply their learning. She has rightly identified teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics as an area for further improvement. The federation is providing appropriate support through a specialist leader in education for mathematics. This is helping teachers to set work at different levels of difficulty. However, the most-able pupils work through all levels and this limits the time that they spend on the work that challenges them and helps to deepen their skills and knowledge. They need to 'jump in' to the work that will deepen their thinking and learning, and spend less time going over what they already know.
- The teachers value the opportunities to extend their skills through observing good and outstanding practice in other schools. They also appreciate the training programmes provided by the federation's teaching school which relate to the various stages in their teaching careers. This, together with individual feedback on their practice from the head of teaching and learning, is securing a consistently good quality of teaching across the school.
- A particularly effective feature of teaching is the feedback given on pupils' writing. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on the teachers' comments and make rapid improvement. The strategy of displaying a piece of writing from the start of the year alongside some current work enables pupils to identify the progress they have made and how they will further improve their work.
- Feedback to individual pupils on their writing and hearing them read individually contributes to all pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs or disability making expected progress, and an above-average proportion making more than expected progress in reading and writing. Results in the Year 1 phonics check

are above average. While pupils make expected progress in mathematics, and some make more than expected progress, not enough of the most-able pupils make more than expected progress for the reasons outlined above.

- Effective provision in the early years results in an above-average proportion of children making a good level of development. The head of teaching and learning has rightly identified the need for greater emphasis on extending children's verbal responses to accelerate progress further.
- Throughout the school, pupils are exceptionally eager to learn and to support each other. Their behaviour is impeccable and they attend school regularly. The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is highly effective. Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents agree. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including from cyber bullying.
- The board of directors has an in-depth knowledge of the school's performance through progress information provided by the school, Ofsted and the Department for Education, reports from the head of teaching and learning, and from reviews carried out by parent directors and external consultants. The board holds the executive headteacher appropriately to account for the school's outcomes. It ensures that all statutory requirements are met and that finances, including the pupil premium and sports premium, are used effectively to improve pupils' achievement. Their positive impact is seen in the improving trend in attainment.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all teachers secure rapid progress for all pupils, especially the most-able pupils, in mathematics by:
 - extending teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics
 - developing teachers' skills in checking pupils' understanding during lessons and moving them on to more appropriately challenging work in a timely manner, especially to deepen the thinking of the most-able pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Frater
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with the executive headteacher and head of teaching and learning, the teachers, a group of pupils and members of the First Federation Trust's board of directors. I examined the quality of pupils' work, especially in English, mathematics and science.

I visited all classes with the head of teaching and learning. We discussed our joint observations of teaching and learning, pupils' attitudes and their progress.

I examined a range of documents, including the leaders' self-evaluation form, school improvement plan, records relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour, and the report for the school's board of directors on the quality of teaching and learning. I took account of the 11 responses to Parent View. There were no responses to the online questionnaires for staff or for pupils.