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Mr Neil McKellar-Turner  
Headteacher  
The Manor Coalpit Heath Church of England Primary School  
Roundways  
Coalpit Heath  
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Dear Mr McKellar-Turner

### **Short inspection of The Manor Coalpit Heath Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on Tuesday 14 June 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 March 2011.

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

The school has taken on a new lease of life since your arrival as headteacher in September 2014. You have wasted no time in working on school improvements and your relentless focus on improving teaching and learning has led to a high turnover of staff during the past year. In so doing, it has resulted in a transformation of learning so that teaching staff now share a culture of high expectations and aspirations for their pupils.

Pupils' achievement is improving because teachers are learning from each other as a team while understanding their individual accountability for their pupils' progress. There is a consistent approach to planning and teaching in each year group. For most groups of pupils, prior learning is systematically built on as they move through the school. The very small group of disadvantaged pupils make good progress in school because the additional funding they receive is used well to support them. However, not all of the most able pupils are achieving the academic standards of which they are capable.

At the time of the previous inspection the school was asked to provide the pupils with sufficient time to discuss with each other what aspects of their work they found easy or difficult. Teaching staff were also asked to check from time to time in lessons whether pupils were clear about what they were learning and if they were meeting their targets. During my visit, I observed pupils discussing their work with

their classmates and working effectively alongside each other, which was enhancing their learning. Most pupils were able to talk about the challenges they had been set, which were linked with the learning targets they were working towards.

At the time of the previous inspection, inconsistencies were also noted in the use of the school's marking policy. You have revised the approach to marking and most teachers use it well. Nevertheless, there still remains some inconsistency in the application of the agreed marking policy.

At the time of the previous inspection, the governors were asked to strengthen their approach to checking the effectiveness of the school. In my discussion with governors they explained that, until a recent review undertaken by the local authority, they had a limited understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Since the review they have used their well-crafted action plan to develop into an effective governing body. While they receive regular and in-depth information from the headteacher, they also check all aspects themselves through visits to the school, discussions with staff and pupils and by looking at pupils' work. Governors are very clear about the improvements which have been made to the school during the past two years. They are justifiably proud of the 'dynamic headteacher' they appointed and are delighted that you are leading improvements at an impressive pace.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a clear culture of safeguarding throughout the school. You and your governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You make sure that all adults who regularly come into contact with pupils are carefully checked and trained. Records are detailed and carefully maintained. This ensures that pupils are protected and kept safe in school. Any issues raised by staff are carefully logged and closely monitored. Good working relationships with external agencies support the work you do to promote the well-being of all your pupils. You, your staff and governors have completed 'Prevent' training, which is a government initiative to promote an awareness of the risks of extremism. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to deal with any such matters, should they arise.

Pupils report that they feel safe in school and point out that they are comfortable approaching teachers with any worries or concerns. They admit that antisocial behaviour does occur from time to time, but are very clear about what steps they need to take when it happens. The pupils I spoke to during my visit had a mature understanding of the dangers of extreme and radical behaviour and referred to public figures they have seen on television who display such characteristics. Pupils understand the importance of keeping safe when using the internet and are clear about the dangers of cyber bullying.

Most parents agree that their children are well looked after and safe in school. Nevertheless, a small minority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire raised some concerns about the safety of their children in school. Although there have been a number of meetings and workshops organised for parents to discuss

aspects of behaviour and bullying, a few of the comments submitted to inspectors indicated that there was still a perception that these issues were not being dealt with appropriately. I carefully checked procedures for logging any incidents and talked to you and your leadership team about how bullying is tackled. I was reassured in these discussions that staff and pupils have a clear understanding of how bullying is tackled and resolved. Nevertheless, it is clear that not all parents are fully aware of the systems and procedures which are now in place. There are a few parents who expressed dissatisfaction with the school's values, including its ethos and pupil reward system.

### **Inspection findings**

- You have high aspirations for the pupils and strive for excellence in school life. Most members of the school community are delighted with all the changes you have made since your arrival. One parent summed up the views of many of the parents by explaining that you are 'a fantastic headteacher' who 'is really passionate about every child's learning and wants them to do well'.
- You and your deputy headteacher work very well together and use your individual strengths to lead and manage the school effectively. You have also established a strong and cohesive senior leadership team which supports you well in your improvement work. You have been instrumental in the rapid improvement in the level of governors' involvement in the school and they are proud of the rapid transformation it has made.
- In 2015 pupils' achievement at the end of Years 2 and 6 was good. A higher proportion of pupils than nationally made the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and many exceeded this. The school's standardised information on the progress of current pupils shows an improving trend. Your accurate analysis shows that differences in the performance of groups of pupils, such as Year 6 girls in writing in 2015, was specific to this cohort and not an indicator of a trend over time.
- Nevertheless, you accurately identify that the most able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable to attain the highest standards. In particular, I noticed that not all of your most able pupils are being challenged to extend their writing skills.
- Standards of reading attained at the end of Years 2 and 6 are a consistent strength of the school. This is because phonics (letter and the sounds that they make) are taught systematically and pupils are encouraged to read widely both at home and school.
- You use extra government funding effectively to support those pupils who are disadvantaged. Well-targeted support and opportunities to participate in additional activities enable these pupils to achieve as well as pupils nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are also well supported and achieve well from their starting points.

- You and your deputy headteacher have worked hard to improve the learning environment. Your high expectations are clearly reflected in the classrooms, which are all vibrant and exciting places to learn.
- Other senior leaders are successfully improving teaching by working alongside their colleagues and encouraging them to reflect on the impact of the way in which they teach. For example, teachers have reassessed the way in which they question individual pupils and are now using questioning more effectively to deepen their thinking.
- The close links that you have developed with three other schools have also been a key driver in helping the school improve its effectiveness. Teachers work with their colleagues to moderate the assessments they have made of pupils' progress and to share best practice.
- The school is working hard to improve the quality of pupils' presentation of their work. They know that they are expected to write neatly and legibly and that sloppy work is unacceptable. Pupils respond well to the feedback they receive from their teachers. However, at times, some teachers miss crucial spelling mistakes or provide pupils with feedback or challenges that they do not understand.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good and they demonstrate an eagerness to learn. They are particularly enthusiastic about the different learning styles they use. For example, they explain that they problem-solve 'like a detective', and they 'adapt their learning' or 'bounce back' from mistakes they might make.
- Pupils are clear about the principles behind British values and demonstrate their knowledge of democracy through the work of the 'eco squad', young leadership team and their other roles of responsibility. They take great interest in the history and traditions of the United Kingdom and particularly enjoyed celebrating the Queen's birthday.
- Parents, pupils and governors are delighted with the rich range of extra-curricular opportunities which you have introduced into the life of the school. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the art, music and sporting activities they are involved in and appreciate the visits they make and visitors to the school linked to their stimulating topic work.
- Many parents referred to your approachability as a headteacher and consider it reassuring that you are 'visible'. The great majority of parents are pleased with the ethos and values of the school, such as respect, care and honesty. One parent expressed the view that 'The school celebrates the pupils' successes regularly in all areas of their lives. This creates a great sense of self-worth and achievement in the children.'

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

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- most-able pupils are being challenged in all year groups so that they are working at their full potential

- the school's marking policy is used consistently by teachers and any comments or challenges suggested are fully understood by pupils
- the already good communications with parents are further developed so that any concerns can be addressed and the school's systems are fully understood.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Brackstone  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you to discuss improvements since the previous inspection. In particular, we considered the improvements made to the school since you were appointed in September 2014. We also discussed your self-evaluation and the initiatives you are taking to further school improvement. I held discussions with six governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority. I met with the 12 members of the school's young leadership team and spoke to a group of pupils informally at lunchtime and during lessons. You, your deputy headteacher and I made a brief visit to all classes. We sampled the work in some of the pupils' books. I looked at the survey results from Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and considered the points they made.