

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mr Matthew Welton
Headteacher
Trinity Church of England Primary School
Longford Road
Heath Town
Wolverhampton
West Midlands
WV10 0UB

Dear Mr Welton

Short inspection of Trinity Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 July 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are a thoughtful leader who has high aspirations for pupils. Together with staff and governors you have created an inclusive school where pupils from different heritages play together well and treat each other with consideration. 'I feel the school is very well led and this filters through to the teachers and assistants. It has a great support system for the children and parents', wrote one parent. This view is shared by other parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire and who spoke with me.

Following the last inspection, senior leaders and governors were asked to further raise pupils' achievement and improve teaching. The actions that you and other senior leaders took immediately after the inspection were relevant. However, the impact of these actions was somewhat hindered due to some significant changes in the school. Last year, major building work took place to accommodate the increase in pupils on roll. Nursery, Reception and Year 1 increased from two to three classes and some pupils were taught in temporary classrooms. You experienced difficulties with teacher recruitment and retention and this led to some classes being taught by a number of teachers. This had a detrimental impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning, especially in Reception and for some pupils in key stage 1.

You and other senior leaders have taken appropriate action in response to the changes in the school last year. The governing body has successfully recruited new

teachers, which has helped to stabilise staffing. Eleven current teachers were not working at the school when it was last inspected. Senior leaders make sure that staff receive suitable training, learn from each other and have the skills required to help pupils learn effectively. This strong focus on staff development is enabling senior leaders to ensure that children in the early years achieve well, pupils make good progress by the end of Year 6, and teaching continues to improve. However, you acknowledge that further work is required to raise the attainment of some of the youngest pupils in key stage 1 so that they catch up on previous learning and that pupils, especially the most able, reach even higher standards in mathematics. The actions you have identified in response to both of these aspects are suitable.

At the previous inspection, raising pupils' attainment in writing was identified as a specific priority. Teachers regularly plan a range of first-hand experiences, such as visits to historical places, or they use books and digital resources to inspire pupils. Teachers also provide pupils with the information they need to make their writing relevant and interesting. As a result, pupils are making good progress in writing over time. Pupils of all ages told me that they enjoy writing and proudly shared their work with me. In one instance, pupils in Year 5 listened intently to a piece of atmospheric music as they worked. 'Nervously, I entered the room and calmly closed the creaking door behind me', wrote a pupil, paying close attention to the use of punctuation and grammar and accuracy of spelling.

Another area identified as needing improvement at the previous inspection was developing pupils' skills as independent and resilient learners. You introduced a strategy across the school whereby teachers plan a sequence of activities to help pupils learn new skills and knowledge, remember what they have learned, apply their learning in different situations and create their own ideas. Pupils spoke positively about this approach. They explained that it helps to organise their learning and it encourages them to think for themselves. During my visits to lessons, I observed pupils concentrating hard on their work, working sensibly together to find the best solutions before asking an adult for help, and finding out information for themselves.

Safeguarding is effective.

The arrangements for keeping pupils safe are effective. All the parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire and who spoke with me during the inspection confirmed that their children feel safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. The pupils who talked with me during the inspection were particularly complimentary about their personal, social and health education lessons. They explained that these lessons help to raise their awareness of potentially hazardous situations. Older pupils, for example, spoke articulately about the dangers of joining gangs, using social media with care, and the importance of alerting an adult to any concerns they may have.

Senior leaders, the school's nurse and members of the school's pastoral team meet weekly to discuss and share any concerns they have about individual pupils. These weekly meetings enable senior leaders to check that pupils are receiving the support they need from external agencies. These meetings also provide a useful

forum for keeping you and senior leaders up to date with any changes in the circumstances of pupils or their families. In partnership with the governing body, you make sure that school policies are regularly reviewed and contain the guidance staff need. Procedures for administering medicine and reporting concerns, for example, are clear and closely adhered to by staff.

Inspection findings

- You and other senior leaders are passionate about securing the best outcomes for pupils by helping teachers to become successful practitioners. Senior leaders make sure that teachers have regular opportunities to work together and share effective practice. This approach has been particularly beneficial in helping new staff settle into the school quickly. It has also created a culture where staff willingly seek help and advice so that they can improve the way in which they work.
- You and other senior leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and also where further improvements are required. This is because you all use an appropriate range of strategies, such as visits to lessons, to check the difference teachers are making to pupils' learning. The discussions with staff following these checks are helpful because they focus on the actions that teachers need to take to continue raising pupils' achievement.
- Each member of the governing body oversees a specific aspect of the school's work. Regular meetings enable governors to keep themselves up to date with changes in the school. Governors have asked you to refine the way in which you present information about pupils' achievement so that it is more accessible for them. You have made some adjustments, but it remains overly complicated. This makes it difficult for governors to ascertain whether the actions taken by leaders are making enough of an impact on the outcomes for different groups.
- Staff in the early years plan activities that help children make strong gains in all areas of learning. Children are inquisitive learners who enjoy exploring both inside the classroom and in the outdoors. In one instance, a group of Nursery children were completely captivated as they investigated the best way of getting a ball across an elevated ramp. They explored different options and were not afraid of learning from their mistakes. The large majority of children currently in Reception are expected to start Year 1 with skills and knowledge that are at least typical for their age.
- The overall percentage of children achieving a good level of development fell to below the national figure in 2015 because of significant disruptions in teaching. These children are currently in Year 1 and work in their books shows that although they have made progress, they have not caught up completely with their learning. The actions you are taking to help Year 1 pupils make faster progress are appropriate. Leaders have introduced a new approach to teaching reading. The level of additional support for these pupils has increased. In preparation for September, you have reorganised teachers across the early years and key stage 1 so that those teachers who are less experienced can be more effectively supported on a daily basis.
- In 2015, the standards attained by pupils in Year 2 were significantly above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing. From their different starting points, the pupils in Year 6 made good progress in reading and

mathematics and reached standards that were above average. They made the progress they should in writing and attained average standards. The school's latest achievement information and inspection evidence confirms that the majority of pupils currently in the school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics over time.

- You correctly identified that in 2015 and at the end of key stages 1 and 2, boys and disadvantaged pupils did not attain as well as other pupils in the school. Staff are now making sure that the activities they plan interest both boys and girls. You and other senior leaders are also checking more frequently that the additional support for disadvantaged pupils is making enough of a difference to pupils' learning. As a consequence, gaps between different groups of pupils in the school are closing.
- Teachers plan a broad range of mathematical activities and ensure that pupils become confident with using their number and calculations skills to find the correct solutions. This enables them to make good progress over time. However, there are occasions when pupils, and especially the most able, repeat what they already know, instead of deepening their mathematical thinking by using their reasoning and problem-solving skills. This is preventing some pupils currently in the school from reaching even higher standards in mathematics.
- The vast majority of staff and pupils who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire were positive about all aspects of the school's work. A few raised a number of concerns, including concerns about pupils' behaviour. During the inspection, some pupils explained that 'a few children can be moody but teachers sort things out quickly'. Pupils also told me that incidents of bullying do not happen often, but when they do, staff resolve them quickly. School records confirm this to be the case.
- I found that pupils behave well in lessons and around school and that the small minority of pupils who sometimes find it difficult to adhere to the school's behaviour policy are well supported by staff, especially by the pastoral team. School records confirm that incidents of poor behaviour are infrequent and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.
- Pupils are confident individuals who embrace differing points of view. During the inspection, for example, pupils in Year 6 debated the implications of leaving Europe before composing a letter to the Prime Minister, David Cameron. The questions they asked were insightful and explored a range of topical issues. Although pupils presented opposing perspectives on some issues, they listened to each other with respect.
- At the time of the inspection, pupils' overall attendance was similar to the national average. Staff keep a close check on the attendance of different groups and especially the disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities, because their attendance was much lower than the national average last year. Due to the concerted efforts of staff, the attendance of these pupils has improved and is now closer to the national average than previously.
- Pupils enjoy taking part in the wide variety of after-school clubs. Clubs such as football, Zumba, cricket, dance, violin and guitar give pupils the chance to learn new skills. The school also gives pupils the chance to visit different parts of the country. Pupils and parents spoke particularly positively about the recent trip to London and the chance to see and experience the sights.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the youngest pupils in key stage 1 catch up with their learning and make consistently good progress
- teachers provide pupils, and especially the most able, with activities that deepen pupils' mathematical understanding
- information about pupils' achievement is presented with greater clarity so that governors can more rigorously check the impact of leaders' actions on the outcomes of different groups of pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the diocese of Lichfield, and the director of children's services for Wolverhampton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you and the two deputy headteachers. I also met with the chair of the governing body and four other governors. I spoke with parents at the start of the school day and spoke with pupils throughout the day. I made brief visits to lessons to observe pupils and to review work in their writing and mathematics books. I reviewed a range of documentation including records relating to keeping pupils safe, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. I took account of nine responses to the Ofsted staff inspection questionnaire, 48 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 14 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.