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1 November 2016

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Dear Mr Kolter

### **Short inspection of St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 12 October 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 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.

You provide strong and effective leadership. You and the senior team, who work closely with you, know the school very well. Your evaluation of what the school is doing well is based on clearly analysed evidence. Plans you have to improve the school further show ambition because you are building on strengths in the school. For example, your current plans seek to develop pupils' cultural awareness further, despite this being a clear strength. Your analysis of the new 2016 progress measures has led you to identify the need to improve pupils' progress in writing from key stage 1 to key stage 2.

Your clarity about starting points enables you to set ambitious targets for pupils. Each year group has a small number of pupils and you are clear about the impact that one or two pupils can have on published information about the school. You have worked swiftly with the 2016 new assessment information to set out a clear progress trajectory for each pupil in the school. However, your evaluations of the extra things you put in place to help small numbers of pupils catch up are not always as effective. You recognise that you can be quicker to review what is working well and what is not.

Governors are effective leaders. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths but are not complacent. Governors ask pertinent questions about the work of the school and use their time in school to see for themselves what leaders are reporting to them. Governors understand the clear differences between their role and the day-to-day role of senior leaders in the school.

Your school is a very calm and purposeful place to learn. This was a strength of the school previously that you have maintained. Pupils in classes work diligently on their own and with each other. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to teaching and learning.

At the last inspection leaders were tasked with increasing progress in mathematics and writing. Your actions have led to:

- rising standards at the end of the early years in 2016, so that almost all children get a good start
- improvements in the teaching of phonics over time that have significantly increased the proportion of children meeting the expected standard in Year 1
- pupils who over time did not reach a good level of development in the early years catching up through key stage 1
- every Year 6 child in 2015 making expected progress in mathematics and writing. The proportion of pupils making more than expected progress was higher than national averages.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You hold detailed records of concerns about pupils' well-being and record what you do with that information meticulously. It is clear when you decide to keep a record of a concern to build a picture over time and when you act instantly. You track your work with other agencies effectively and referrals are both thorough and timely.

You provide thorough induction and regular safeguarding updates for staff which contribute to a culture where pupils' safety and well-being is paramount. You are diligent in the way that you record staff training, staff attendance at key update meetings and who has read and understood current statutory guidance. All staff and parents feel that pupils are safe in the school.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders are highly evaluative and are ambitious for every pupil. Governors and staff value your leadership. The analysis of pupils' progress over time is thorough and this has sharpened the focus on those pupils who need to catch up. You have improved teaching and raised standards across the school over time. However, you recognise there is more that can be done. The tracking of the short-term interventions you put in place is not always reviewed quickly enough. This means that you

are not always able to make decisions about what is working well or really well for individual pupils in a timely manner.

- Governors make a good contribution to the leadership of the school. Governors know the school well because they spend time in the school seeing things themselves. Visits are planned, have a clear purpose and leave leaders with things to consider or do. Governors understand the difference between their strategic role and the role of senior leaders. Governors have spoken to pupils about their use of tablet computers in lessons to get a sense of value for money and the impact on learning. Governors have been able to see examples of the school's values in action first hand, as pupils show perseverance in tackling complex mathematical problems.
- The teaching of phonics has improved since the last inspection. In 2013 less than half the pupils in Year 1 met the expected standard in the screening check, and this was well below the national average. In 2015, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard exceeded the national average.
- In 2016 a very small number of pupils did not meet the expected standard in Year 1 phonics and this means that the proportion of pupils who did is just below national averages. Pupils who arrive at different points in the year and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points.
- Almost all children at the end of the Reception Year in 2016 reached a good level of development because teaching is effective. All staff, including teaching assistants, help children develop good letter sound knowledge quickly. Accurate assessment enables adults to build quickly on what pupils know and can do.
- Pupils who did not reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year in the past catch up. Your actions have accelerated the progress of boys' writing in key stage 1.
- Pupils enjoy reading, including the small number who are not yet working at age-related expectations. Pupils still developing their phonics skills try hard to use the strategies they have learned to sound out unfamiliar words. Pupils are taught other skills, such as using the pictures to help make sense of the words in front of them, and this means that they are successful when reading age-appropriate texts. The most able pupils read books that challenge them. They read fluently and tackle unfamiliar words with confidence, using their phonics knowledge to break words up into sounds and then put them back together.
- Standards in writing at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 have been consistently above national averages over time. In July 2016 the proportion of pupils working at the expected standard at the end of Year 2 was broadly in line with national averages.
- Your focus on challenging the most able writers has led to the proportion of pupils working at higher than expected levels being consistently above the national average over time. However, your analysis of the 2016 new progress measures highlights that increasing the rate of progress between key stage 1 and key stage 2 writing is a next step for the school.

- You have taken a lead role in developing the teaching of mathematics. Standards at the end of key stage 2 increased significantly in 2014 and 2015, including for the very small number of disadvantaged pupils.
- Your improvement plans last year focused on increasing the proportions of pupils in key stage 1 reaching the higher standards in mathematics. Your analysis of 2016 outcomes shows that the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in mathematics is broadly in line with the national average.
- Your focus on the school's values is having a positive impact on learning. Pupils can talk about what perseverance means and refer instantly to examples in their work where they have not given up. Pupils approach challenge with relish. Teachers know pupils' starting points well and plan challenge into lessons effectively. Pupils' engagement with the task at hand is exemplary.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Time and space is given for pupils to reflect inside and outside of lessons. The work around remembrance with older pupils exemplifies the heightened sense of thinking deeply that the school encourages. Staff recognise and reward pupils who model the school's values in their actions. Teamwork and sportsmanship have equal value to academic achievement in celebratory displays.
- Pupils develop a strong sense of the world beyond their community. Links with a school in an urban locality and a school on the other side of the world give pupils the opportunity to explore similarities and differences.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The school's values provide a clear platform for pupils to develop respect and tolerance. Assemblies have a clear, planned focus and themes are followed up in classrooms. One example is the thoughtful exploration of tolerance in the wider work around Rosa Parks. Pupils learn about a range of religions and faiths and use links with other schools beyond the locality to strengthen this work.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the progress that pupils make in their writing from key stage 1 to key stage 2 accelerates
- the impact of additional support and interventions is analysed more closely to make timely decisions about what is working well.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Cole  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I worked with you during the inspection to look closely at:

- the effectiveness of phonics teaching and learning in the early years and Year 1
- the impact leaders have had on standards in writing, particularly in key stage 1
- how well prepared pupils are for life in modern Britain
- the impact leaders have had on mathematics teaching, learning and assessment
- the effectiveness of your safeguarding procedures and the culture in the school.

I met with you and senior leaders to review your evaluation of the school and your plans for improvement. I met with governors and held a conversation with the local authority. I accompanied you and senior staff on visits to lessons and we looked at work in books and on display. I heard pupils read and spoke to pupils in lessons about their work and their school. I looked at the 76 responses on Parent View and the 16 staff survey returns. I checked the effectiveness of your safeguarding arrangements, including those related to recruiting staff.