

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



22 December 2016

Mrs Janet Stoppani
Headteacher
Flore Church of England Primary School
The Avenue
Flore
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN7 4LZ

Dear Mrs Stoppani

Short inspection of Flore Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 December 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 November 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 have consistently provided effective leadership to ensure that pupils continue to receive a good quality of education across all areas of the school. You have taken action to improve aspects of the school identified at the last inspection. In all aspects of school improvement work you are ably supported by your highly effective deputy headteacher. Pupils enjoy their life at school and appreciate the opportunities on offer. They are happy to attend as demonstrated by their eagerness to enter the building at the start of the day. The school encourages a culture of community and care. Pupils describe the school as being 'a big family' which 'looks after each other'. Staff know individual pupils well. Parents are supportive of the work you do and comment on the support that their children receive on a day-to-day basis.

You have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas which would benefit from further improvement. Since the last inspection you have taken action to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and ensured that all teachers are supported to provide a consistently good quality of teaching. You have eradicated the very small amount of weaker teaching and continue to develop the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through your monitoring activities such as observing lessons and holding pupil progress meetings with class teachers. This has enabled you to closely monitor the progress that pupils make and ensure that additional support is provided when it is needed.

Since the last inspection you have explored a variety of ways to help pupils understand what they should be able to achieve and the means by which to do so. You have introduced a new system of assessment and target-setting which enables pupils to understand what they can do and what they need to do to improve further. You report this information regularly to parents and encourage them to respond to this information and to work with their children, thus supporting learning at home.

You have also adapted the curriculum to ensure that pupils are able to make links across different subject areas. The theme-based curriculum is designed around a literary text which provides opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity and thinking skills alongside their writing in a number of different genres. For example, key stage 1 pupils have read Roald Dahl's 'The BFG' and used this text as a stimulus to create their own 'dream jars' before writing a non-fiction account of a memory and fictional texts such as poetry. Similarly, children in Reception have studied Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' before creating characters out of leaves and practising their writing skills on activities based around this text.

Pupils' progress in the early years is continuing to improve and the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is greater than the national average. In 2016, a very small number of pupils did not reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. All pupils had reached this standard by the end of Year 2. You have taken immediate action to ensure that current pupils reach the expected standard. The deputy headteacher now teaches phonics to this group each morning and current tracking of their performance indicates that there will be a significant improvement in outcomes for these pupils.

In key stage 2, a few pupils did not make as much progress in mathematics as that made by all pupils nationally. You have carried out detailed analysis of pupils' performances and identified very specific aspects of the curriculum that require additional input. Again, you have taken immediate action to ensure that current pupils have a secure understanding of these areas. When we visited lessons, we saw that pupils were making good progress in these aspects of their learning, for example, in problem-solving and the application of mathematics understanding.

Governors are committed and share your passion to provide the best for pupils in the school. They are extremely knowledgeable and have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They offer an appropriate balance of support and challenge to secure continued improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All staff are committed to safeguarding pupils' well-being. Their knowledge of individual pupils, alongside the positive relationships they develop, means that pupils are, and feel, safe. Staff and governors are appropriately trained. You have ensured that a number of staff are trained as safeguarding leaders. Pupils know and

understand how to keep safe. They report that incidents of bullying are rare but are confident that it would be dealt with, should it occur.

Inspection findings

- You have written a clear action plan which appropriately addresses areas for improvement. You, your leadership team and governors meet regularly to discuss progress against these actions. Together, you evaluate your work realistically and amend plans accordingly to ensure continued school improvement.
- The quality of teaching is good across the school. You have identified where it is consistently strongest and ensured that staff work collaboratively to share good practice. Teachers work together to develop their own and each other's strengths; they are self-reflective and keen to improve further. You are in the process of developing a formalised system of peer observing and coaching to enhance this collaborative approach further.
- You have worked with other schools to share good practice and are clear about the benefits that this has offered, for example in moderating pupils' writing. You are keen to develop links with other schools further to gain wider experiences.
- Teachers plan activities which are interesting and therefore engage pupils across all years. This means that pupils enjoy their learning and they go about their work with a sense of purpose. They understand the value of the work that is set for them. In the vast majority of lessons, activities are matched to pupils' abilities. A small number of pupils commented that they found some of their work too easy.
- The provision in the early years is improving. There has been significant remodelling of both the physical environment and the curriculum in this area. Activities encourage children to practise their writing skills, for example through 'daily writes'. A greater focus on reading has helped children develop their love of reading. During the inspection, I observed parents reading with their children and helping them to write on pre-prepared cards as other children were arriving at the start of the day. When we visited lessons, we noted a lively, purposeful atmosphere; children were working with high levels of concentration and they demonstrated both collaborative and independent skills well.
- Parents appreciate the communication they receive about their children's progress. This is particularly strong in the early years provision, where the use of an online communication system has helped parents to understand their children's progress and encourages them to assist in their children's learning.
- You have encouraged a love of reading across the school. Since the last inspection you have created a central, open library area. Its location and inviting appearance encourages pupils to explore the variety of texts on offer. Pupils told me that they like to use this area and enjoy being able to select books and take them home. Displays throughout the school celebrate literature and encourage high expectations of what pupils are able to read. For example, the display about Shakespeare's 'The Tempest' is visually inspiring and celebrates the creative writing that pupils of all ages have produced following their study of this text.
- I listened to a number of pupils of different ages read. They were all keen to share their books with me and read with interest and enjoyment. Younger pupils were able to use their phonics skills to work out unfamiliar words, while older,

more competent readers read with fluency and expression. Pupils enjoyed talking about their reading and were able to discuss characters, their motivations and narratives clearly.

- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading and writing, at the end of key stage 2, is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard in reading is also above the national average. However, no pupils reached the higher standard in writing. You recognise this as an area of priority.
- Pupils and parents appreciate the Christian ethos and values of the school. They value their 'Christian Partnerships' and the visitors to the school that these bring.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare is promoted well. Pupils experience a wide variety of enriching opportunities, for example visits to the theatre. The school also welcomes external visitors to extend pupils' understanding of the world. For example, pupils had participated in a workshop to explore African culture. They had made drums from flowerpots, created artwork and designed and made jewellery.
- You promote pupils' understanding of fundamental British values well, both through the curriculum and wider school life. There is an emphasis on supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across all age groups. I observed an assembly where pupils were considering the impact of global conflict. They demonstrated empathy and respect for those less fortunate than themselves, for example, by reading prayers that they had written themselves. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to explore a variety of arts and culture and, more recently you have developed pupils' experiences of sporting activities.
- You, other leaders and governors recognise the need to improve pupils' progress in mathematics as an area of priority. Significant work has already been undertaken to raise the profile of mathematics in the school and to encourage greater pupil interest, particularly among the girls. You have invested in a new, online mathematics tool which assesses pupils' ability then uses this information to target learning at individual pupils' needs. Pupils are interested in this additional means of learning and you have found that it is particularly useful for pupils to practise and extend their learning at home. Plans are in place to develop girls' interest further through a joint project planned with Northampton University.
- You have established an extensive programme of intervention activities which support pupils to catch up where gaps in their learning are identified. Activities are designed around the needs of individual pupils and take place both within school hours and at the start of each day.
- Since the last inspection you have worked with parents to involve them in their children's learning. You communicate regularly and invite parents to participate in activities. For example, I observed a number of parents of pupils in key stage 2 engaging in an interactive exhibition of pupils' work around their topic of Greek culture. Both pupils and parents were extremely proud to celebrate the achievements on display. Some of the parents of children in Reception regularly participate in learning activities at the start of each day as they help to settle their children and prepare them for the day's learning. You are keen to involve more parents in their children's learning, both in school and at home.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' progress in mathematics improves so that it is in line with that made in reading and writing
- strategies already introduced are embedded to:
 - improve the proportion of pupils reaching a greater depth in writing
 - increase the proportion of parents assisting with their children's learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection my focus was on whether outcomes for pupils remained good, the effectiveness of leadership and management and whether the school's safeguarding arrangements are effective. I held discussions with senior leaders, other staff and governors. I spoke with pupils and listened to pupils of different ages read. I visited every class to observe pupils' learning and looked at the work in a number of pupils' books. I spoke with parents as they were dropping their children off at school and also while they were participating in activities in school. I considered the 25 responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View and the nine free-text responses from parents. I scrutinised documentation relating to school improvement and to the monitoring of pupils' well-being and their progress. I gathered information from the school's website. The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.