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Mrs Claire Platt
Executive Headteacher
Galmpton Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Platt

Short inspection of Galmpton Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 2017, 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.

Since the previous inspection, you and your leadership team have ensured that the quality of education in the school remains good despite significant changes in leadership and teaching in recent years. You have worked well with governors to take advantage of this period of change and successfully developed a beneficial link with your partner school. Closer working with colleagues in other schools and the local authority is also strengthening the procedures for checking the work of the school. Issues of concern are swiftly and effectively addressed. Leaders at all levels within your partnership share a strong determination to sustain good teaching and build on pupils' achievements. Staff morale is high. All staff, including several newly qualified teachers, feel valued and respond well to the guidance they receive from leaders.

The very large majority of the questionnaire responses received from parents and pupils are very positive. When questioned, pupils were swift in identifying that Galmpton continues to be 'a safe, happy and very welcoming place to learn'. Parents welcome the caring atmosphere across the school and value a culture that encourages them to become more involved in their children's learning at home and school.

You have successfully tackled the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection, such as governance and teachers providing work that better suits pupils' learning needs. Governors now play a more effective role in checking the

performance of the school and in holding leaders to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. School and national assessments show that pupils' attainments at the end of key stages 1 and 2 have been mostly above the national average. This has been especially the case in mathematics. Your success in improving the teaching of phonics is also helping to quicken pupils' progress in reading. As a priority, you are taking action to improve pupils' writing skills. An increasing number of pupils are reaching expected levels of skill for their age. However, less improvement has been made in increasing the number of pupils currently achieving greater depth in their writing skills through key stages 1 and 2.

Safeguarding is effective.

- You and the designated officer make sure that the statutorily required safeguarding arrangements are in place, kept up to date and are of high quality. You and your senior leaders promote a strong culture of safeguarding. This enables all staff to recognise the importance of understanding agreed safeguarding policies and implementing procedures effectively to keep pupils safe. For example, staff know who to approach and what steps to take should a potential issue arise.
- Case studies show that staff take swift and effective action to deal with incidents. For example, the diligent use of new electronic recording procedures by members of staff show that incidents are accurately evaluated and potential risks carefully assessed. School records show that close links are maintained with parents and outside agencies and that staff sustain a careful watch to keep pupils as safe as possible.

Inspection findings

- The very positive relationships between pupils and staff continue to be strengths. These relationships securely underpin pupils' enjoyment of school and their good learning. Pupils' good behaviour and improved contributions to learning show that they are well prepared for their future education by the time they leave the school.
- You and senior leaders have helped teachers to stimulate and improve pupils' interest in learning, which has supported their faster progress in recent terms. For example, when questioned, pupils expressed their raised interest in topic studies such as Earth and Space and Micro Organisms, which is improving their learning.
- In response to stimulating teaching and learning experiences, children continue to make a happy and successful start to school life during their time in Reception. As a result, an above average proportion of children achieve a good level of development by the time they enter Year 1.
- Teachers' improved identification and targeting of pupils' different needs and starting points are quickening pupils' progress in key stage 1. This has led to particularly improved teaching and learning in phonics and mathematics.
- Pupils have also improved the way they present their work and develop their

handwriting skills. However, pupils' performance in national and school assessments show that some pupils are not developing their sentence writing skills sufficiently by the end of Year 2. School and inspection checks show that this is particularly related to those pupils who had previously exceeded the early learning goals at the end of Reception.

- As a team, leaders are promoting an effective emphasis in all classes on challenging pupils, deepening understanding and accelerating their progress. You have identified the need, in some key stage 2 classes, to raise the skills and depth of understanding of particular groups of pupils. For example, you are now targeting the learning of boys, middle ability pupils and some disadvantaged pupils. Evaluations of pupils' responses in class and work in books show that it is their ability to write fluently and control sentence structure and meaning that needs to be deepened.
- Checks of pupils' work in their science and religious education books reflect the interesting topics that pupils enjoy. However, the limited range and quality of the writing evident indicate that writing skills are not being developed well enough across the range of subjects.
- School records show that pupils' attendance had fallen significantly in recent years, due to a rise in persistent absence and increased holidays during term time. New leaders have worked effectively with outside agencies and parents over the past year to tackle this issue. Their rigorous action in challenging and reducing pupils' absence has led to levels of attendance that are now above average.

Next steps for the school

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that all pupils sustain rapid progress and achieve to the best of their ability, especially in writing, by:
 - ensuring that teachers in key stage 2 classes provide all pupils, but especially boys and middle ability pupils, with the challenge and support they need to write with greater depth and meaning
 - ensuring that teachers in key stage 1 classes continue the strong work started in the Reception class so that the most able writers excel in their ability to write more complex and descriptive sentences
 - making sure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to fully develop their writing skills when learning across the range of subjects.

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 Torbay. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alexander Baxter
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and the head of school, a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils, the chair of the governing body and a representative group of governors. Most classes were visited during a joint learning walk with you or the head of school. Samples of pupils' work in books were scrutinised. Pupils were observed during the lunch break. A wide range of documents, especially those relating to safeguarding pupils, attendance and school self-evaluation and development were evaluated. A telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority was conducted. 39 responses to the Ofsted online Parent View survey, 11 responses to the staff survey and 20 responses to the pupils' survey were considered.

In particular, the inspection focused on the following key lines of enquiry:

- What is the effectiveness of leaders' and teachers' actions to increase the proportion of pupils developing greater depth in their learning in key stage 2, especially middle ability pupils and boys, in writing?
- What are leaders and teachers doing to raise standards, especially in writing in key stage 1 by disadvantaged and most able pupils, especially those who exceeded the early learning goals at the end of Reception?
- How successfully are leaders tackling and reducing persistent absence and improving the overall rate of pupils' attendance, especially by girls and disadvantaged pupils?