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Mr Paul Griffiths
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Griffiths

Short inspection of Spofforth Church of England Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 February 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 July 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your vision to develop a culture of learning where pupils develop resilience and are engaged in purposeful activities which put their skills to the test is clear to see. Productivity is high and attitudes to learning are excellent.

Your active engagement and collaboration with other schools, in the federation, the learning partnership and beyond, results in a continuing cycle of improvement, for leaders, staff and, consequently, your pupils. An able and proactive governing body fully support you and ask challenging questions when they need to, to ensure the best outcomes for pupils. They too value the partnerships that exist and use these effectively, constantly seeking to improve their own practice.

Provision for children in the early years has improved since the last inspection. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of Reception has continued to rise. This year, boys entered school with lower starting points than girls, but are quickly catching up. Adults work effectively together to create purposeful and exciting experiences and children show sustained concentration across different activities. Adults use effective questioning to encourage children to think independently and develop their learning in an environment that is safe. Children are encouraged to explore and try new things. Effective modelling from staff, in role-play areas in particular, helps children develop

their skills in turn-taking and working cooperatively, as well as extending their communication skills.

There is a common view among staff, parents and children that school is a very positive place to be. One parent describes it as 'one big family', and pupils find it very difficult to think of anything that can be improved! Regular and effective methods of communication exist between home and school so that parents can celebrate learning and receive key messages and information. Pupils are proud of their school and 'pupil ambassadors' work with pupils in partner schools to share ideas about further improvement.

School self-evaluation is accurate because of your thorough analysis of school data and checks on the quality teaching and learning. Outcomes for key stage 2 pupils have been strong over time. However, you were disappointed by pupils' overall attainment in Year 6 in 2016. Pupils' work and the school's own assessments support your view that the proportion of pupils currently working at the expected standard is at least similar to the national average and in many cases better. You accurately identified issues and have addressed them effectively. You agree that teachers need further support in ensuring that the learning and progress of the most able pupils in writing is accurately and consistently assessed and that subsequent next steps in learning are identified to further deepen learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding procedures are in place and understood by all staff. You have made sure that your own training, as the designated safeguarding lead, and that of staff is up to date. You communicate well with other agencies when necessary and keep detailed information of relevant actions and support for pupils.

A range of teaching and learning activities and whole-school systems are in place to help pupils keep safe. For example, pupils explained that the school has a firewall to protect them from accessing inappropriate information online, but knew that these same filters may not be in place at home or when accessing the internet elsewhere. They spoke with certainty about whom they could speak to if they were worried about this, or any other aspects of safety.

Inspection findings

- Your drive to ensure that pupils are actively involved in developing their reasoning skills across the curriculum is having a positive impact. In mathematics in particular, pupils across school apply new skills with confidence to solve problems, test hypotheses and share their reasoning. Older pupils demonstrate strong reasoning skills and the ability to make high-quality vocabulary and grammatical choices in English.
- The way in which pupils of all ages talk about their work with each other, embedding and further developing their own learning, is impressive. For example, children in the early years were supporting each other in their writing, reminding each other to sound out a new word and read their sentence to check

it made sense. Pupils in lower key stage 2 were purposeful and evaluative in their work with a partner in reading activities. One child said, 'I don't think that we have enough evidence in the text to back that up.'

- Plans for the spending of the pupil premium are detailed and provide a range of support for disadvantaged pupils. These children generally make good progress over their time in school. However, plans do not always take into account the range of potential barriers that pupils may have to making good progress, and attention is not always given to providing effective support for the most able disadvantaged pupils. As a result, these pupils do not consistently make the same strong progress.
- Pupils speak with confidence about Christianity and demonstrate knowledge of other faiths and religions. However, they are not as clear about why it is important to learn about other people's cultures and beliefs. Pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain is an area that you agree requires further development.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers become more skilled at assessing the most able pupils in writing and identifying next steps to further deepen learning
- the most able disadvantaged pupils are well supported in making good progress
- pupils develop a good understanding of life in modern Britain.

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

Yours sincerely

Kate Rowley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection you and I spent time together in classrooms and looking at pupils' work. We discussed your evaluation of the school, the resulting action plans and the impact of this work. We looked at the progress pupils are making using the school's assessment system and your analyses, including information about disadvantaged pupils. I attended collective worship.

I met with leaders, governors, early years staff, pupils, parents, the school administration team and the new local authority partner.

I scrutinised a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, attendance, the quality of teaching and learning, external reviews of the school and

responses from parents, staff and pupils to Ofsted's online questionnaires.