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Mr Chris Ward
Executive Headteacher
Ann Cam Church of England Primary School
Bayfield Gardens
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Dear Mr Ward

Short inspection of Ann Cam Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 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 January 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection.

Your appointment as executive headteacher renewed leaders' focus on improving outcomes for pupils at the school. You, along with governors, have created a strong ethos where the school's Christian values of 'Respect, Thankfulness and Friendship' underpin all aspects of school life. Staff support these values and help to create a harmonious, supportive environment in which children learn well, are happy, safe and secure. As a result, pupils across all year groups are making good progress and show good attitudes to their learning.

All parents who spoke to me, or responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were extremely positive about the school and said they would recommend it to others. They acknowledge the noticeable difference you have made to the quality of pupils' learning and the progress they make. Comments such as 'my daughter has progressed in leaps and bounds' and 'standards have risen appreciably' are typical. The school's warm, friendly atmosphere is highly valued by parents who said that their children feel 'safe and loved'.

A range of extra activities and experiences enhance the school's broad curriculum. These encourage pupils to make their own contribution to improving school life through, for example, membership of the pupil council and the house system. Year 6 pupils are proud of being 'buddies' to the Reception children. Through their own

initiative, they are introducing a 'buddy bench' on the playground so that no pupil will feel lonely at break times.

Since the previous inspection, teachers and leaders have worked hard to improve the school. Pupils now use their phonic skills regularly to support their reading. This has helped more pupils reach the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 1. Pupils revisit their work, using the advice teachers give them to make it even better. This is helping current pupils to make good progress from their starting points.

Evidence shows that extension activities are now planned regularly in mathematics. Nonetheless, you agree that it is time to ensure that mathematics teaching provides regular opportunities for pupils to extend their skills so that more achieve the highest standards of attainment in key stages 1 and 2. Additionally, you recognise that middle leadership is in its early stages of supporting the development of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements are secure and followed meticulously by all staff. Leaders ensure that records are detailed and of high quality. Staff recognise the signs of abuse and how to report any concerns about a pupil, including those risks posed by female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Governors evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures regularly.

You and your staff have created an environment in which pupils say they feel safe. They understand the different types of bullying that can occur, although incidents are rare. Pupils say their teachers deal promptly and effectively with any issues that arise. A well-planned programme of activities, such as regular presentations on e-safety, help to raise pupils' awareness of how they can reduce risks in their everyday lives.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, I focused on: how well children develop their reading skills between the Reception Year and key stage 1; whether current pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their starting points; the progress of current pupils in key stage 2; and the effectiveness of leaders' actions to improve attendance.
- We agreed the focus on how transition from the early years to key stage 1 helps pupils to achieve better, especially in reading in key stage 1. Children's progress in the early years is good and they achieve broadly in line with children nationally. Good links are established with the on-site, independently run nursery through monthly visits to the early years class. This helps to make the children's transition easier and allows them to settle into the school quickly. Children have access to a wide range of activities in the early years, in speaking and listening. There are plenty of opportunities for outdoor learning, with the 'bug hotel' proving particularly popular with both children and parents.

- Target-setting for children is effective in the early years, and key stage 1, especially for low-attaining and vulnerable children. As a result of effective ongoing assessment, good use is made of short-term targets. These change frequently, often daily. Termly reading assessment also keeps a close check on pupils' progress. This process continues in key stage 1 and results in pupils developing skills in reading and showing greater depth in writing and mathematics. However, as you agree, there is room for further improvement for pupils to develop greater depth in these subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. You are the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and lead this aspect of the school's work well with a very detailed knowledge of the needs of every pupil. Staff ensure that they are planning work which is at the right level for pupils of different abilities. Effective interventions meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, lower-attaining pupils and boys. Staff work closely with you to identify need and quickly provide necessary support. As a result of this work, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, many of whom are boys, have access to the curriculum and achieve well, whatever their starting points or particular needs. The result of your actions shows that these pupils are making good progress across the school. However, you agree that as part of the need to develop middle leadership, and widen staff professional development, the staff member who has begun training to become a SENCo should expedite this as soon as possible.
- Progress through key stage 2, including for disadvantaged pupils, was an area we agreed to examine. Despite standards across the school being in line with age-related expectations, there is still room to stretch and challenge more pupils so they can achieve the high standard by the end of key stage 2, especially in mathematics and writing. You and the staff are committed to achieving this. The new assessment procedures are resulting in greater improvement and challenges in writing and mathematics. You are developing a stronger focus on problem-solving and developing 'mastery' in mathematics. The impact of this work is already visible in the work seen in Years 1 and 2 where pupils achieve very well. Leaders are determined that this rate of improvement will manifest itself in even better outcomes by the end of key stage 2.
- Attendance for the last academic year was in line with the national average, though disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs were absent more frequently. Although the numbers in each group are small, a high percentage of these pupils were absent. You and other staff monitor attendance carefully, and work closely with families to reduce this absence. As a result, attendance has risen.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers extend pupils' skills in mathematics so a greater proportion achieve greater depth at key stage 1 and a high standard at key stage 2

- the development of middle leaders continues, especially with regard to the role of special educational needs coordinator.

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

Yours sincerely

Terry Mortimer
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and members of staff. The inspection also involved a meeting with the chair of and vice-chair of the governing body, and a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. There were 31 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and parents' views were sought when they brought their children to school. We visited all the classrooms together to observe pupils' learning and talk to them about it. Work by pupils with a range of abilities was looked at in mathematics and English. I listened to a group of pupils reading aloud. A wide range of documentation and information relating to your self-evaluation, school improvement planning, equalities, assessment, monitoring and evaluation, and safeguarding was also examined.