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Nic George  
Headteacher  
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Brampford Speke  
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Dear Mr George

### **Short inspection of Brampford Speke Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 April 2013.

#### **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 a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas it still needs to work on. This has enabled you to set clear priorities to improve the school further.

Effective middle leaders ably support you in driving school improvement. Together you have created a culture in which pupils achieve highly, enjoy their learning and become well-rounded individuals prepared for life beyond primary school. Support for pupils with special educational needs is particularly effective. Leaders leave no stone unturned in working with external agencies to overcome barriers to learning.

You and other leaders have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. For example, teachers ensure that the most able pupils receive the challenge they need to make good progress. You have also been successful in improving the quality of teaching in mathematics.

The knowledgeable governing body further strengthens leadership. Governors are well informed and know the school well. They use training in governance effectively to keep abreast of changes in the educational climate. They provide you with good support and a strong level of challenge, especially around pupils' outcomes.

Staff enjoy their work. Many are highly skilled. They contribute to a purposeful school culture. Pupils speak warmly about the support and encouragement they receive. They told me how the school motto 'be positive' helps them to be determined and try hard. Pupils demonstrate their positive attitudes through, for example, running their own clubs such as the Makaton signing club.

Some changes in staffing have proved a challenge for you and the governing body to manage. You have taken appropriate action to minimise the impact of staff changes and pupils continue to make good progress. However, a few parents expressed dissatisfaction that your communication has not been clear enough to reassure them about their concerns. Despite this, virtually all parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, say that they would recommend the school. In particular, parents speak of the 'friendly and nurturing atmosphere'. They clearly see the school as a valuable feature of the local community. Nonetheless, some parents would like to see relevant homework set and followed up more regularly.

### **Safeguarding is effective**

Staff have nurtured an open culture in which pupils feel able to share any concerns or anxieties they have. This is because of the strong and trusting relationships within the school. Pupils report that they feel safe. They say that there are sometimes 'fall-outs' in school but that there is hardly ever any bullying. They are confident that when bullying does occur, staff take it very seriously and resolve matters successfully. Leaders' records demonstrate vigilance in following up concerns. Close relationships with families ensure that communication between school and home is effective, particularly for the most vulnerable pupils.

You make sure that staff are well trained to keep pupils safe from harm. Staff know the procedures to follow and who to talk to if they have concerns about a pupil's welfare. Records are well kept so that designated staff are able to share information effectively and keep close track of ongoing cases. Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work in the school are robust and records well maintained.

### **Inspection findings**

- My first line of enquiry related to the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics. The mathematics leader provides staff with effective training and guidance. As a result, pupils achieve well in this subject. Very small cohorts of pupils make national comparisons difficult. However, the 2016 test results for pupils in both Years 2 and 6 show that pupils achieve at least as well as others nationally. In addition, all of the most able children went on to achieve a high standard. Work in pupils' books and assessment information confirm that pupils make good progress in mathematics. A greater proportion of pupils are on track to achieve a high standard than previously. Teaching assistants provide effective support in helping pupils to catch up quickly when they fall behind in their learning.
- My next line of enquiry focused on the effectiveness of leaders' decisions in deploying additional funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make good

progress. Although there are very few pupils in receipt of the additional funding, the school goes the extra mile to ensure that this group of pupils make good progress emotionally and academically. Leaders ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged by their circumstances. For example, they provide access to opportunities such as peripatetic music lessons and school trips. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in all areas of the curriculum because of well-matched work and the highly skilled support of teaching assistants.

- My final line of enquiry centred on pupils' progress in writing. The end of key stage 2 outcomes in 2016 showed that pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as in other subjects. Although the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard was in line with the national average, no pupil made better than expected progress to achieve a high standard. Outcomes for writing in the early years and Year 2 show that some pupils reach a high standard. Our work scrutiny showed that teachers' expectations in Years 4, 5 and 6 are not as high as elsewhere in the school. Although pupils in these years are making some progress, it is less marked, especially for middle-ability pupils. Teachers' assessment is less developed in writing than in mathematics.
- One area that the school is focusing on is improving pupils' key skills in spelling. Leaders have identified that weakness in spelling is a barrier to further progress and attainment in writing for some pupils. Your newly appointed leader for English has provided staff with training and guidance but it is too soon to see the impact of this work.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- recently developed systems for assessment are strengthened and thoroughly embedded in order to provide teachers with increasingly robust information on which to base their planning
- teacher's expectations of pupils' writing in Years 4, 5 and 6 are sufficiently rigorous so that more pupils, and middle-ability pupils in particular, achieve a high standard
- pupils across the school develop greater accuracy in their spelling.

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

Yours sincerely

Tracy Hannon  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I spoke to you, staff, pupils and two members of the governing body. I made visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning and to scrutinise their work.

I considered a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation, development plans, attendance, behaviour and safeguarding documentation.

In addition, I took account of 32 responses to the Parent View online survey, 13 responses to the staff survey and 17 responses to the pupil survey.