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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Kathryn Hemming
Headteacher
St Paul's Church of England Primary School
Orchard Road
Chessington
Surrey
KT9 1AJ

Dear Mrs Hemming

Short inspection of St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Following visits to the school on 11 January 2017 by Claire Majumdar, Ofsted Inspector, and on 23 February 2017 by John Seal, Her Majesty's Inspector, we write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in September 2012.

This school continues to be good.

Your clear and determined vision has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have accurately identified the strengths and areas to develop in the school and have set challenging targets. The capable and enthusiastic senior and middle leaders provide additional depth and strength to ensure the school continues to improve. Although there was a decline in the quality of teaching following the previous inspection, which had an impact on pupils' attainment and progress, you have worked successfully to improve its quality. You have tightened up the procedures for managing the performance of teachers and ensured that leaders give staff the support they require. Consequently, pupils' rates of progress have significantly increased since September 2016.

By April 2016, leadership and teaching were strong, but the impact of this strength was not able to make up for previous underachievement. However, current assessment information and evidence in pupils' books demonstrate that most pupils are meeting or exceeding their age-related expectations, particularly in writing. This improvement is most notable in key stage 1, and the progress made by boys and the most able pupils. Pupils told an inspector how pleased they were with the progress they were making in their writing.

You and your team have created a school with a very strong, caring, community ethos. One pupil described the school as 'just like a big family who look after each other'. The staff, parents and pupils are very supportive of their school and the

care, support and guidance it offers.

You enjoy teaching and lead by example in adopting innovative approaches to learning. Pupils are encouraged to take risks and know that if they fail at something, they do not give up.

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a high quality. Pupils put into practice the values such as friendship, respect and tolerance in their everyday lives. They manage their behaviour well at all times and show exceptional confidence and good manners.

Governors know the school well. They have a range of skills and experience that support and challenge you effectively. Many members of the governing body are regular visitors to the school and spoke of the open, honest and transparent relationship they have with you and all of your staff. Nonetheless, there is further work required to ensure they are able to gain a precise picture of pupils' year-on-year achievements. This analysis will enable the school to build securely on pupils' prior attainment.

You have ensured that the school's website meets statutory requirements and that all the required policies and procedures are available on the site.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders have established effective safeguarding policies and practices. Regular training is organised for all staff and governors. School leaders maintain good communication with external agencies; this ensures that pupils at St Paul's are kept safe and secure. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and the staff survey shows that staff support this view. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online, and in and out of school. They know if they are worried about anything there is always an adult who will help them.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is high and above the national figure. The school, in partnership with external agencies, has worked effectively with the very small number of pupils who, previously, did not attend well.

Inspection findings

- Standards have been variable over time. The national assessments in 2016 showed that pupils, particularly the most able, did not make enough progress in reading, writing or mathematics. This was in contrast to pupils' good performance in the Year 1 national phonics screening check. The teaching of mathematics and English are effective because of the leaders' work in improving the quality of learning and teaching. Work in pupils' books, along with more rigorous assessment procedures, indicate that the majority of pupils are already on track to meet and or exceed the expected standards, particularly in writing.
- You and the senior leaders have rightly focused on driving improvement in English. As a result, pupils are now making rapid progress. Working with other schools has increased the teachers' confidence when evaluating with accuracy, pupils' performance. These changes have contributed towards immediate improvement for all pupils, particularly in their reading and writing, so that the majority of pupils are already meeting the expected standard, particularly in writing.
- Evidence in books shows that pupils write well and use grammar, punctuation and spelling in their work that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.
- Teachers encourage pupils to take ownership of their learning. Opportunities to refine and improve their work are regular. Targets are challenging and pupils can clearly explain what they need to do next in order to improve. This has meant that the majority of pupils in Year 6 are making rapid progress and meeting the expected standard, particularly in their writing.
- School leaders analyse assessment information more sharply to track pupils' progress and intervene where necessary. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and provide effective support, particularly for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils are now making good progress towards their targets.
- Following the review of the school's procedures for homework, teachers ensure that pupils have a range of strategies for developing a handwriting style, reading and learning spellings. Workshops and information booklets provide parents with support to help their child at home. As a result, parents report that they feel more confident when helping their child with homework. They can see improvements in reading fluency, handwriting and spelling for their children.
- The Year 1 phonics check results were above the national figure. By the end of Year 2 in 2015, pupils continued to do well in all subjects. However, by the end of Year 2 in 2016, pupils' attainment in all subjects was below the national average. Your swift action to halt any further decline has led to current assessment information and book scrutiny indicating that pupils in Year 2 are now making faster progress. Pupils are on track to achieve outcomes that are in line with, or above national expectations.
- Effective strategies are in place and support pupils' reading. Pupils bring stories to life with their use of expression. They can confidently explain what is going on in the story, and what they think might happen next. Reading journals show that children have the opportunity to read to an adult regularly, both in school and at home. Consequently, pupils' standards in reading have improved, particularly in

key stage 1.

- The governing body have a good understanding of the impact of recent strategies to improve teaching and pupils' progress. They hold you and other leaders to account to good effect. However, they are less clear about how current pupils' progress and attainment compares with previous years.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the regular monitoring of pupils' progress and attainment is checked at frequent intervals to ensure they are continuing to improve on previous years' performance.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Majumdar
Ofsted Inspector

John Seal
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

The inspectors agreed to prioritise the following areas with the school at the start of the inspection:

- how leaders are ensuring better progress for pupils in key stage 1
- whether pupils in key stage 2, particularly boys, are making better progress from their starting points, especially in writing
- whether there is sufficient challenge for most-able pupils in key stage 2 to enable them to achieve better progress and outcomes

- the effectiveness of leaders' analysis of pupils' assessment information
- the attendance of all pupils and groups of pupils
- the effectiveness of safeguarding.

The inspectors carried out a range of activities to explore these areas during the inspection.

- They held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the governor body, a representative from the local authority, and the school council.
- They considered information provided from Parent View, and pupil and staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors visited five part-lessons, accompanied by the headteacher.
- They scrutinised books from all year groups and listened to pupils reading from Years 2, 4 and 6.
- Inspectors scrutinised and discussed assessment information and leaders' analyses.