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Mr Alex Beaumont
Meltham CofE (VC) Primary School
Holmfirth Road
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Dear Mr Beaumont

Short inspection of Meltham Church of England (VC) Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 2 March 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 March 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are highly regarded by pupils, staff, parents and governors. You provide positive and energetic leadership and you know pupils well. Pupils benefit from a rich curriculum. Regular trips and visitors and extra-curricular activities extend their knowledge and experience. Pupils develop their skills in sports and they take part in stimulating outdoor educational activities. Music and art are strengths of the school. The school's values and ethos promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development strongly. Attendance is high because pupils enjoy school. The school is at the centre of the community; staff and pupils share a strong sense of belonging and communication with parents is good. Parents and carers have a high level of appreciation of the wide range of school activities and events.

At the last inspection, you were asked to raise attainment in mathematics. Your focus on the most able in mathematics, and the dedicated teaching of this group, have enabled pupils to accelerate their progress and reach higher standards in mathematics. In 2016, pupils at the end of key stage 2 made more progress than pupils did nationally in mathematics, compared with their starting points at key stage 1. Pupils with weak number skills at the end of the early years made good progress in reaching the expected standard at the end of key stage 1. You have also improved the development of children's number skills in the early years.

You were asked to strengthen the consistency of teaching, including the impact of

teaching assistants. You have redeployed teaching assistants so that they provide more-effective in-class support. Some need further support in their teaching of phonics to ensure that more pupils reach the required standard in Year 1 and Year 2.

You were also asked to make sure that teaching consistently meets the range of pupils' needs. Your wide range of assessment methods provide accurate information about the skills that pupils have learned and the gaps in their knowledge. Teachers are using this information effectively to target pupils' identified learning needs. Pupils have also taken greater responsibility for editing and correcting their own work.

Leaders' monitoring of pupils' progress, and the evaluation of the impact of teaching, are not sufficiently sharp and formal to ensure consistently prompt and effective action to accelerate the progress of underachieving pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records of action are detailed and of high quality. The school has an effective system for identifying emerging concerns. Those responsible for safeguarding follow these up promptly and record actions systematically. Staff have good knowledge of pupils and their families and work well with parents and carers. Carers praised the high commitment of staff and the strong support for their children. The school works effectively with a wide range of agencies. Effective actions by the school and other agencies have made a difference in ensuring the safety, well-being and welfare of pupils.

Inspection findings

- Your wide range of assessment methods, including tests and pupil interviews, accurately measure pupils' achievement and analyse progress against their targets. Leaders and teachers acquire a good knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses from regular objective external tests as well as from the teacher's ongoing assessment. They use this information well to plan teaching that meets the identified needs of individuals and year groups in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils receive effective guidance from teachers and they know what they need to do to improve.
- Attainment and progress at the end of Year 2 improved in 2016. Overall, pupils at the end of key stage 1 made more progress than pupils did nationally in reading and mathematics. Girls made less progress than girls did nationally.
- In 2016, the progress pupils made by the end of key stage 2 in reading and writing was in line with that of pupils nationally. Pupils made better progress in mathematics.
- In 2016, the progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium was similar to others nationally in all subjects at key stages 1 and 2, except in writing at key stage 1, where it was not as strong.

- In 2016, the proportion of children at the end of Reception reaching a good level of development dipped below average. Assessments and samples of work indicate that current children are making secure progress in the development of their writing.
- The library is well used and staff give good encouragement and rewards for reading at home. The school promotes reading for pleasure well. Weaker readers are using their phonic skills methodically to increase their fluency and accuracy.
- Leaders' expertise guides the teaching of writing effectively. Teachers successfully engage and motivate pupils to write for different purposes. Pupils acquire and learn to apply the formal aspects of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- senior leaders monitor pupil progress more formally, and evaluate the impact of teaching more rigorously, in order to accelerate the progress of underachieving pupils more securely
- the proportion of pupils meeting the national standard in phonics in Years 1 and 2 rises above the national average, by coaching staff in the most effective methods of teaching phonics
- the proportion of children reaching a good level of development in the early years increases to above the national average.

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

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, senior and middle leaders, a group of pupils, the chair and three members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority. I also spoke to parents dropping off children for school. I jointly observed teaching with you in a sample of classes and I discussed the learning in pupils' books with you and other leaders. I also listened to pupils read.

I checked the school website and examined a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, assessment information, the school development plan and safeguarding records. I took account of 113 responses from parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire and 20 written responses. I also took account of 27 responses from staff and 23 responses from pupils.