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Mr John Berry
Headteacher
Horbury St Peter's and Clifton CofE (VC) Primary School
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Dear Mr Berry

Short inspection of Horbury St Peter's and Clifton CofE (VC) Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 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 January 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 have established a culture of high expectations and a strong commitment to ongoing improvement. You have strengthened senior leadership by building a strong team of leaders across different phases. These leaders continually monitor pupils' progress and teacher performance to drive continual improvement. As a result of strong leadership, rigorous systems and highly effective teaching, pupils achieve high standards and make extremely strong progress.

You and your teachers have responded diligently to the increased demands of the new national curriculum and associated assessment tasks. Teachers plan together to address these heightened expectations and build additional challenge into lessons. As a result, at key stage 2 in 2016 pupils made outstanding progress and achieved outcomes that were well above those seen nationally. Similar joint planning contributed to good progress at key stage 1, although a smaller proportion of pupils achieved success at greater depth. Leaders are aware of this and are currently strengthening the curriculum to accelerate pupils' progress at key stage 1.

Your commitment to the professional development of your team has a clear impact upon improvement. Teachers across the school work with local and national partners to moderate standards, strengthen expertise and improve provision for

pupils. You are willing to invest in key areas, such as the recent intensive training to further develop mastery in mathematics. The school's own strengths are sought by other schools and the local authority has called upon the expertise of the subject leader for mathematics and the headteacher's leadership skills to spread good practice.

The strength of leadership at the school is underpinned by robust procedures and systems. Pupils' progress is tracked and reviewed every half term and summaries of progress are shared with teachers and governors. Performance management procedures are robust and individual targets are closely aligned to whole-school targets. Concerns over pupil welfare are assiduously recorded. These systems provide a stable platform that enables leaders to carry out their roles with a healthy degree of trust and independence with the knowledge that clear systems of accountability remain.

While the school has clear academic strengths, you and your team are equally committed to the social and emotional development of pupils. The school's Christian values add a moral purpose that permeates all aspects of the school's work. For example, pupils talked eloquently about the term's focus, the value of forgiveness. The rigour of the ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum is enriched by wider experiences and learning opportunities. Pupils value the extensive opportunities to participate in a range of sports and cultural activities, including art, drama and film club. Four separate school productions took place at Christmas and the school has its own choir and orchestra. Two regular residential visits enable pupils to experience outdoor pursuits. Pupils appreciate the wider experiences on offer which add to their self-esteem and confidence.

Governors are committed to the success of the school. They combine ongoing reviews of the school's performance with wider consideration of long-term developments, such as the forthcoming increase in admissions and expansion of the building. The chair of the governing body ensures he has a close awareness of the school's work through weekly meetings with the headteacher. Appropriate committee structures are in place to monitor standards and finance. The headteacher provides governors with detailed but accessible half-termly updates on pupils' progress. They explore this progress information but on occasions do not bring consistent challenge. Governors have defined roles for key areas such as safeguarding and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and they carry out their responsibilities diligently.

Safeguarding is effective.

The headteacher and his team maintain a consistent focus on pupils' welfare and take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. Rigorous checks are made on the suitability of adults working at the school. Staff receive up-to-date training on key safeguarding issues. A learning mentor has specific responsibilities for pupil welfare and works with senior leaders to regularly monitor pupils' well-being. Close links are maintained with external agencies. Any concerns over pupil welfare are followed up and records are assiduously kept. Pupils feel safe and well supported in

school, and the vast majority of their parents and carers agree. The calm and orderly atmosphere cultivated by teachers supports pupils in feeling safe and secure. Pupils spoken with were able to discuss the actions they could take to remain safe, for example the actions needed to stay safe online.

Inspection findings

- You and your team have instilled a culture of high expectation and developed robust planning procedures that have built rigour into teaching, learning and assessment that has enabled pupils to respond well to more challenging curriculum demands. In the 2016 national tests at key stage 2, pupils achieved outstanding outcomes, with pupils achieving levels of attainment and progress that were well above those seen nationally. Pupils' progress in reading and mathematics was particularly strong.
- The impact of teaching is consistently good across the curriculum and teachers demonstrate considerable subject expertise. They question pupils skilfully to deepen their understanding. Teachers engender effective learning behaviours in pupils, who are comfortable when asked to explain, develop or reconsider a response to a question. Pupils have the confidence to routinely share their answers or read their work aloud to the class. Pupils show considerable pride in their work and this extends to science, topic and religious education (RE) books where they continue to make good progress. Teachers provide valuable feedback in line with the school's policy.
- Teachers and teaching assistants effectively develop pupils' reading skills and achieve outcomes in the phonics screening check that are above those seen nationally. Pupils' reading skills develop strongly as they progress through the school, enabling them to read thematically rich and challenging texts with perceptive understanding. Reading records show that pupils read widely.
- Pupils develop strong writing skills and demonstrate accomplished writing in their books over time. They have the ability to write effectively in a range of genres and are comfortable writing at length. Teachers enable pupils to develop an extremely good understanding of grammatical features and use them to considerable effect in their own writing. Pupils discuss grammatical features and literary terms with considerable insight.
- Pupils achieve extremely strong outcomes in mathematics as teachers have considerable expertise which they use to much effect in well-planned lessons. Work in books revealed that pupils have regular opportunities to develop their computational methods through frequent practice. Pupils work productively and some pupils have already completed four mathematics books. Pupils explore demanding mathematics problems and consolidate and deepen their mathematical understanding and reasoning.
- While pupils make good progress at key stage 1, in 2016 the proportion that achieved greater depth in their assessments was below that seen nationally. Leaders are investing increasing challenge into the curriculum and this is contributing to increasing proportions exceeding their expected levels at key stage 1.

- As a result of careful planning and effective teaching, children in the early years make good progress and achieve levels of development above those seen nationally. Teachers achieve a balance between continuous play and more formal opportunities to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders assess pupils' progress deftly, as reflected in children's learning journals which show a strong picture of progress.
- Pupils are well behaved and conduct themselves in a friendly and orderly manner around the site. Relationships are strong and this gives pupils the confidence to contribute openly in lessons. Pupils are extremely positive learners, who can swiftly move without fuss from group discussion to quiet working conditions.
- Teachers closely track the progress of disadvantaged pupils who made outstanding progress in reading and mathematics at key stage 2 in 2016. Their progress at key stage 1 was less strong. Current progress information shows that disadvantaged pupils are making stronger progress, although variance remains in some year groups. As a result of stronger tracking and intervention, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved although variability remains between year groups.
- Leaders have a close understanding of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupil profiles succinctly highlight their needs and through well-mapped provision current pupils are making good progress. Through challenging teaching and a robust curriculum, the most able pupils achieve standards above those seen nationally at key stage 2, although their progress at key stage 1 is not as strong.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- accelerate pupils' progress at key stage 1 by strengthening the curriculum to give pupils more opportunities to work at greater depth
- further diminish differences between the progress, attainment and attendance of disadvantaged pupils and that of their peers nationally.

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

Yours sincerely

Malcolm Kirtley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and many members of your leadership team. I also spoke by telephone to the chair of the governing body and talked to the governor who has responsibility for special educational needs and/or disabilities. I held a meeting with a group of pupils and talked to pupils less formally in lessons. I also talked to the school improvement adviser from the local authority. I undertook a learning walk with you and senior leaders. I also looked at pupils' work in books and folders. I examined the school improvement plan as well as other documents, including the school's self-evaluation, assessment information, behaviour and attendance information and pupil tracking. I examined safeguarding documents, including the single central record. I took into account 32 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and 15 free-text responses. I also took into account 23 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.