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Mrs N Moody
Headteacher
Newport Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School
Avenue Road
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Dear Mrs Moody

Short inspection of Newport Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 9 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 April 2012.

This school continues to be good.

Since the previous inspection you have been appointed as headteacher, following the retirement of your predecessor. Two colleagues have been promoted to join the senior leadership team. Several governors are new in post, and the chair of the governing body has recently taken up this position. The governing body is actively recruiting new members to reflect the increasing number of pupils who attend the school. New governors receive formal training and benefit from working alongside more established colleagues.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, your staff and governors are ambitious for pupils and for continued improvement at the school. You are knowledgeable and clear about the strengths that the school has and the areas to develop further. The judgements leaders make about the quality of provision are accurate. You use sound evidence on which you base your judgements about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is varied and balanced. Teachers use the specialist technology and sports facilities available at the school well. Pupils appreciate the wide range of learning opportunities that they have. Staff enrich the curriculum with many additional clubs, activities and visits that are well attended. As a result, pupils' personal and social skills develop well. Pupils and parents agree that

the curriculum and additional opportunities are a real strength of the school.

Central to the school's ethos is to prepare young people successfully both for the next steps in their education and for adult life. It is clear that the decisions you make and the aspects of the school that are being developed are underpinned by this purpose. Staff and governors share your vision for the school and are supportive of the decisions and actions you take to move the school forwards.

Following the last inspection, senior leaders were asked to ensure that outcomes stated in improvement plans are measurable and focused sharply on improving pupils' achievement. Senior leaders and governors use targets which are clear and measurable and specify groups of pupils. As a result of these improvements, leaders set targets to manage the performance of teachers which are robust, challenging and based unmistakably on expectations of pupils' outcomes.

At the last inspection, improving pupils' awareness, knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom and globally was identified as a particular priority. Leaders have successfully revised and enhanced the school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education programme. Leaders identify opportunities to promote cultural diversity within the curriculum, for example in humanities lessons. Pupils use information technology well to extend partnerships with those from different cultures, such as links with schools in other countries. In addition, leaders make sure that pupils develop their cultural awareness through the wider curriculum including school activities, such as the global awareness day and visits.

Safeguarding is effective.

The processes that are in place in order to safeguard pupils are robust and effective. For example, leaders make certain that adults who work at the school are appropriately vetted to ensure that they are suitable to work with pupils. Leaders also have very clear expectations of the role that staff play to safeguard pupils' safety and welfare. These expectations are well supported by regular and effective training. Staff are clear about the actions that they should take if they identify any concerns and there is a culture of high vigilance around safeguarding issues. Leaders responsible for safeguarding provide timely and appropriate additional support for pupils who require it. Records of actions taken are detailed and of high quality.

Pupils are taught effectively and are confident about how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They are clear that there are adults at school who they would talk to if they had any concerns about their own welfare, or that of their friends. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. Staff and parents agree that pupils are safe as a result of the systems that are in place and the school's culture of safeguarding.

Inspection findings

- Leaders accurately evaluate the school's effectiveness. They identify areas that require further improvement in order for the school to become outstanding. Governors are increasingly providing targeted and appropriate challenge to leaders. They make sure that the information they are given is accurate and valid. The governing body commissions a school improvement adviser who provides external validation of leaders' judgements and appropriate challenge and support, particularly to the headteacher. Governors and the school's improvement adviser regularly check on leaders' progress and the impact of the actions they take.
- Leaders regularly collect and analyse information about how much progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics. They use this information to evaluate pupils' progress and attainment in each year group, and for different groups of pupils. Leaders are less able to evaluate pupils' progress in other curriculum subjects because the information they collect is less detailed.
- In national tests in 2016, pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics at the expected level was above the national average, repeating the pattern of previous years. The proportions of pupils achieving at higher levels were similar to the national average. These trends continue for current pupils. However, rates of progress have been below the national level, particularly for middle prior attaining pupils in writing and high prior attaining pupils in mathematics. In 2016, teachers' assessments of writing showed that pupils' attainment was better than nationally, but that rates of progress, particularly for middle prior attaining pupils, were lower than national expectations.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar rates of progress to other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics, but their attainment is slightly lower. The learning needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are met well. Their rates of progress in reading and mathematics are much better than the national rate, and just below in writing.
- Middle leaders' skills develop well through participating in training that focuses on school leadership. They take opportunities to apply their knowledge, for example through monitoring the quality of learning within their subject areas. Middle leaders evaluate the information they collect, and take action as required. In mathematics, teachers now successfully plan more challenging work for pupils who are targeted to achieve at the higher level. In writing, pupils have opportunities to write at length, in a range of subjects, to consolidate the skills they have been taught. Leaders carefully select writing topics that motivate, engage and inspire pupils.
- Leaders ensure that there are many and varied opportunities for pupils to learn about and develop their awareness of a wide range of cultures. These opportunities are carefully integrated into the curriculum and are enriched by additional activities such as the school's inter-faith day. All staff successfully promote a culture that encourages tolerance and respect for diversity. Pupils develop a curiosity about those who are different from themselves, and a confidence to find out about and celebrate diversity.

- Leaders do not currently evaluate the impact of the work to develop pupils' spiritual, social, moral, and cultural development as systematically as they do other aspects of the school's provision. As a result, judgements about the effectiveness of this provision are less substantiated than other aspects of self-evaluation.
- Pupils' attendance is similar to the national average. Currently, different groups of pupils attend school equally well. In previous years, the rates of absence of pupils eligible for free school meals and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were higher than for other groups of pupils. These trends are accounted for by unavoidable circumstances. In such instances, leaders take every effort to support pupils' education during their absence. Leaders ensure that there are clear and effective procedures in place to monitor attendance and swiftly follow up any absences.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- rates of progress continue to improve
- information about how well pupils are doing across the whole of the curriculum is evaluated and used to inform future plans.

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

Yours sincerely

Rob Hackfath
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and other leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding. I met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. I also spoke with a representative from the improvement service that the school has commissioned.

I joined you in visits to lessons where we spoke to pupils about their work and looked at work in their books. I evaluated a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation and action plan, recent information on pupils' progress and other records about keeping pupils safe, their attendance and behaviour.

Pupils gave me their views of the school when they spoke to me during a formal

meeting and at social times. I took the views of school staff into account through the 22 responses to an inspection questionnaire for staff. The views of parents were considered through the 53 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.