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Mrs Carol Dougill
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Dougill

Short inspection of Siddington Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 15 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 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 demonstrate a deeply held belief that every pupil deserves the best education. Your leaders share your vision. As a result, the school has improved significantly since the previous inspection. All leaders, including governors, have a secure and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. You have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Staff receive the support and training they need to deliver high-quality lessons so that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve. Standards are rising and pupils make good progress from their starting points. This includes those who join the school at different times of the year.

Since your appointment in February 2015, you have maintained a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. This was an area for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Together with your governors, you have not shied away from taking the actions needed to ensure teaching is of the highest quality. Consequently, Siddington Primary School now has a good reputation in the community. The number of pupils on roll is rising and parents are very satisfied with the school's work. Also, staff say they are 'proud to work at the school'.

All staff work tirelessly to support pupils' well-being and ensure that they make good progress in their academic and personal development. The school has developed a strong ethos where every child is valued. This has been achieved through the intensive

work you do with families to help them support their child at school effectively. Parents describe the school as 'inclusive, and very caring and nurturing'. Consequently, pupils say they 'love school' and the attendance of most pupils is steadily improving.

You have built an effective and skilled leadership team. Governors provide strong support but they also challenge you and other leaders for continued improvement. For example, governors are now fully involved in setting the priorities and strategic direction for the school. They then ensure that the actions taken successfully impact on improving pupils' outcomes. For example, the school has recently expanded from three to four classes. Leaders carefully considered how best to implement this change to benefit the pupils' learning. Consequently, teachers are providing increased challenge and focused and targeted support for pupils in their lessons to help them make faster progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your leaders place the highest priority on keeping pupils safe. The culture of safeguarding is strong. All staff understand and effectively implement the school's policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. You make effective use of local agencies to support your most vulnerable pupils. All staff and governors undertake the most rigorous of training in safeguarding, including recognising the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. This ensures that they identify and immediately act on signs of harm or risk. This work is a strength of the school. Pupils say they are well cared for and feel safe. They are clear that any incidents of bullying are quickly dealt with.

You ensure that staff are recruited safely. The school's business manager ensures that rigorous checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are carried out meticulously.

Inspection findings

- We agreed the key lines of enquiry at the start of the inspection to check that the school remains good. Firstly, we evaluated the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics to ensure that pupils in the early years and key stage 1 achieve well in reading and writing. You recognised that the school's approach to teaching phonics was not supporting pupils to make fast enough progress, particularly for the disadvantaged and most able pupils. Although outcomes at the end of Year 2 improved in 2016 from the previous year in reading and writing, you have not been complacent.
- Your approach, implemented during this last year, has had a very positive impact. Children in the early years quickly learn their initial sounds and begin to read and write simple words. Parents confirm that their children make 'rapid progress'. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are engaged in their learning and are making faster progress. Nearly all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are on track to achieve the phonics screening check this year. The school's information and work in pupils' books confirms that pupils are making faster progress in their writing and reading.
- We then evaluated the extent to which the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school enables pupils to make good progress in English and

mathematics by the end of Year 6. Your relentless drive to improve the quality of teaching is helping to raise standards further. Teachers now plan work securely based on what pupils know, understand and can do. You have ensured that you use the expertise in Siddington and Kemble Primary Schools to support teachers to improve the quality of their teaching further. For example, teachers benefit from joint training and share examples of what works well. As a result, teachers now have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. They have a greater understanding of the expectations of the new mathematics curriculum and encourage pupils to 'explain their thinking and justify their answers'.

- You check the achievement and progress of every pupil frequently and implement 'catch-up' work when needed. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged, demonstrate an increasing use of language and vocabulary. Work in pupils' books confirms that they are making good progress from their starting points. However, leaders agree that the most able pupils require even further challenge, especially in mathematics, to ensure that they reach the highest standards in their work.
- Since your appointment in February 2015, you have systematically evaluated the school's performance, including checking that the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. You check the quality of teaching regularly and provide training and coaching to staff to improve their teaching further. For example, teachers are skilled at questioning pupils to check their understanding and to extend their learning further. In addition, all staff share leaders' sharp focus on improving the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers provide feedback to these pupils as a priority. Pupils read their teachers' comments and respond to edit and improve their work. The inspector observed pupils in Years 5 and 6 working independently and with their friends to discuss how to improve their work. This is preparing them well for secondary school. Pupils leave Siddington Primary School as independent and resourceful learners.
- Finally, we evaluated the school's actions to improve pupils' attendance. You and your staff are vigilant in following up all absences. You monitor attendance meticulously and work with a small minority of families to support them to ensure that their children attend school regularly. However, some parents still do not understand the impact that missing school has on their child's education, despite the school's strenuous efforts. Nonetheless, the culture of strong attendance is strengthening as a result of your determination to tackle this issue. Fewer pupils are persistently absent than found in the last academic year.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- work planned provides even greater challenge, especially in mathematics, for the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils so that these pupils achieve the highest standards
- leaders continue to improve attendance, especially for the most vulnerable pupils, by

working with parents and families to help them to understand the importance of attending school each day.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Leahy
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, other leaders and your subject leaders for mathematics and English. I also spoke with teachers, support staff and pupils and met with the vice-chair of the governing body. I spoke by telephone with the representative from the local authority with responsibility for this school. During the inspection, I visited classrooms to carry out a learning walk, accompanied by the deputy headteacher. We observed pupils' learning, looked at the work in their books and listened to pupils read. In addition, I evaluated the school's plans for improvement and its self-evaluation, together with records of the monitoring of teaching and learning and minutes of the most recent governing body meetings. I carried out a full review of safeguarding, including an evaluation of the single central record, records of meetings with local agencies and staff training, recruitment and safeguarding policies and procedures. I took account of 11 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire and further responses to the free text service. In addition, the inspector analysed 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.