

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Aileen MacMillan
Headteacher
St Andrew's CofE Primary School
Park Lane
Shifnal
Shropshire
TF11 9HD

Dear Mrs MacMillan

Short inspection of St Andrew's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 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 February 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment in April 2016, there have been a number of staffing changes, which you have managed well. You place a high priority on developing staff and ensure that effective support and training are in place to further develop the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Staff appreciate this support and the opportunities you give them to develop professionally.

Parents are strongly supportive of the school. 'The school provides an excellent learning environment within which my child thrives,' is one of many positive comments made by parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire. The vast majority of parents are appreciative of the care and support that you and your staff provide for their children. The pupils exude a sense of joy, happiness and togetherness. As one pupil put it, 'There are huge friendship groups and there is always someone to go to.'

At the time of the last inspection, leaders were asked to ensure that all staff manage behaviour consistently across the school. This has been successfully achieved. Behaviour in the school is exemplary. There are high standards of behaviour in lessons, around school and in the playground at breaktimes. Pupils manage their own behaviour extremely well and can be trusted to carry out tasks and activities without close supervision. Pupils support each other during lessons, show a high level of respect to all adults and are polite and confident individuals.

Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop responsible behaviours, such as representing their year groups on the school council, being trained as play leaders or becoming 'bronze ambassadors'. Bronze ambassadors lead and develop sports and games for pupils across the school. Leaders maintain and review behaviour logs carefully and ensure that any negative behaviours are addressed quickly. Effective support is provided for pupils who require additional help to manage their own behaviour.

Following the previous inspection, leaders were also asked to formalise the monitoring of teaching and learning to provide teachers with better-focused areas for improvement. You and your leaders have developed the school's monitoring systems effectively. Leaders also monitor subjects such as science to make sure that pupils receive good teaching and learning across the curriculum, not just in English and mathematics. Leaders use the monitoring systems to identify where further development is needed, and then appropriate support and training are put in place to improve the quality of teaching. As a result, teaching is consistently good across the school.

However, the teaching of writing is not as strong as that of reading and mathematics. In 2015 and 2016, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 in writing was below national averages. In 2016, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards in writing at the end of key stage 2 was also below the national average. You and your leaders have identified this and are taking effective action to provide further training and support to all staff to improve the teaching of writing to enable pupils, especially the most able, to make the progress of which they are capable.

You and the governors are highly ambitious for the school. As the governors put it, 'We want to be the best we can be.' The school's own assessment systems show that teachers do not yet understand how to use the systems to full effect. You and your leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance and have identified this in your improvement planning. However, while the improvement planning identifies the key priorities to develop the school further, and the actions required to achieve them, it lacks the precise details of the outcomes you expect as a result of the actions taken. Consequently, you and the governors are unable to assess fully if the actions have been successful.

While the school's overall attendance figures are above national averages, a small group of pupils are not attending school regularly enough and, therefore, are not making the progress of which they are capable.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality. Leaders place a high priority on pupils' welfare and work with a range of agencies to support pupils when needed. All staff receive regular safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Health and safety audits are undertaken,

including of the school site, with appropriate risk assessments put in place where needed.

Pupils have a very well developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They are taught how to keep themselves safe online and talk confidently about what to do if they have any concerns. Pupils have a very clear understanding of what bullying is, including cyber bullying. They say bullying is very rare but, if it does happen, they know there is always someone they can talk to in school. Pupils developed the 'Anti-bullying Bee' poster, which is a cartoon strip to show them what to do if they are being bullied.

Inspection findings

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. There are excellent relationships between all adults and pupils, and pupils work hard to achieve their best. Work in books demonstrates that the vast majority of pupils are making at least expected progress in writing, with some making more-than-expected progress. However, teachers do not consistently plan work which is matched accurately enough to pupils' needs. This is especially the case for the most able pupils, where teachers' expectations of what they can achieve are, on occasions, too low. As a result, some of the most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in writing.
- You and your leaders have recently introduced new assessment systems for reading, writing and mathematics. While these systems enable leaders to track pupils' progress, teachers are not yet using them accurately enough. Further checks on the accuracy of the assessments are needed to ensure that they are being consistently applied across the school. You and your leaders have recognised this and are already taking action to develop and refine these systems, including providing further training for staff.
- You and your staff place a high emphasis, not only on academic achievements, but also on developing pupils' understanding of values, including developing pupils' respect for and tolerance of people of other faiths. For example, pupils are given opportunities to share information about their different religions, customs and traditions with their classmates.
- Pupils value and care deeply for one another. 'We can be who we want to be and still have our friends,' is an opinion expressed by one pupil, and one which was shared by all pupils spoken to. The school's values encompass British values, and pupils have a good understanding of them. You and your staff are preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' overall attendance is above national averages. However, the attendance of some disadvantaged pupils remains well below acceptable levels. You have identified this and have sought additional support from the education welfare officer to improve the attendance of this small group. You have implemented effective strategies to improve the attendance of some of these pupils. However, there remains work to be done with some families to ensure that their children attend school every day.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers' expectations of what pupils, especially the most able, can achieve in writing are sufficiently high, and work is planned to meet their needs
- recently introduced assessment systems are further refined, and teachers' assessments are checked carefully to ensure that they are accurate
- school improvement planning is further developed and includes the precise and measureable outcomes expected as a result of actions taken
- further support and challenge are provided to families whose children do not attend school regularly.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Pritchard
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection I met with you, an assistant headteacher and members of the governing body. I also met with a representative from the local authority. You joined me on brief visits to lessons. I talked to pupils about their learning and looked at examples of their work. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and to pupils at lunchtime. I reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, the school development plan, documents relating to keeping pupils safe, attendance figures and the most recent information about pupils' achievement. I considered the responses from the Ofsted online questionnaire from parents and staff. There were no responses from the pupils' questionnaire.

This inspection focused particularly on: the effectiveness of leadership and management in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning; how well writing is taught; how well pupils' behaviour is managed; the attendance of pupils; and the actions taken by leaders in response to the recommendations from the previous inspection.