

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



31 March 2017

Mrs Jo Hicks
Archbishop Wake Church of England Primary School
Black Lane
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 8SW

Dear Mrs Hicks

Short inspection of Archbishop Wake Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in March 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 have maintained a school that is welcoming and rigorous in its determination to keep standards high. You engage positively with the community and local schools through your work as chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. Parents and pupils are proud to be associated with the school you lead. As one parent commented, 'The school is a lovely environment for the pupils to develop as people.'

Since the last inspection, you have revitalised the early years foundation stage. The children benefit from a well-equipped outside area where they can engage in construction and creative play that stimulates their dexterity and learning. The competent leader and her staff, ably managed by you, are providing exciting activities through which the children are adopting good reading and writing skills. This is providing a very secure start to their education within the school.

Within the main body of the school, you have continued to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils' progress continues to improve with the skilful and guided help of teachers and teaching assistants. In the end-of-year tests at key stage 2 in 2016, pupils' attainment was in the top 10% of schools nationally for mathematics. You are striving to gain similar successes in reading and writing.

The learning environment in the school provides pupils with a plentiful supply of

opportunities to develop independence and work constructively as a team. The curriculum, supported by a range of extra-curricular activities, enriches life experiences for the pupils. Visitors, such as the 'bug man', and the science fair organised with local schools deepen pupils' understanding of the wider world. Pupils understand their learning and in mathematics, in particular, pupils choose the level at which to challenge themselves, depending on their ability. This is helping pupils to become resilient learners who are willing to solve demanding problems. Equally, within English, where learning is progressing more quickly, pupils are encouraged to proofread their work and correct it based on prior learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have created a culture where pupils feel safe and secure in school. You are vigilant in your determination to suppress the slightest sign of unkind behaviour to any pupil. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and child protection records are detailed and of high quality. The safeguarding policy is up to date and very comprehensive. The most recent Department for Education guidelines are on the website, which has all the necessary information about safeguarding. Staff are trained in how to keep pupils safe from abuse, sexual exploitation and the influence of radical or extreme views. You work sensitively with parents and external agencies to monitor and support any vulnerable pupils.

Inspection findings

- An area that was investigated to ascertain that the school remains good was the improvements made in writing. Although attainment was just above the national average in the end-of-year tests at key stage 2, progress was in the middle 20%, which was not as strong as the other core subjects. The very good work that is now taking place in the teaching of phonics is providing a secure basis for reading and writing as pupils move through the school. At key stage 1, teachers are ensuring that pupils are writing in sentences and always use capital letters and appropriate closing punctuation, such as full stops, exclamation marks and question marks. The work in key stage 2 extends pupils' thinking and develops a more sophisticated understanding of the refinements of writing for different purposes, which the majority of pupils are doing well. Occasionally, pupils' work is accepted with careless errors, which impedes further progress, and you know that this is an area that requires improvement.
- Another area that was investigated was the difference in progress between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. You have made sure that staff are aware of these pupils and their particular needs so that, when interventions happen, they are evaluated constantly to make sure that they are having an impact on progress. You have ensured that pupils read to someone as well as themselves, so that their vocabulary, fluency and comprehension continue to improve. Likewise, pupils have the same opportunities in the school and benefit from strong support that is helping them to be successful in the future. However, though differences are diminishing, you know that this is an area of work that needs to continue until these pupils are making the same progress as others.
- There is a similar pattern with some of the pupils who have special educational

needs and/or disabilities who are not making as much progress as their peers. Many of the pupils are on the special educational needs register because of poor speech and language skills. You have employed a teaching assistant trained to work with this area of need and this is helping these pupils to accelerate their learning, especially in key stage 1. The special educational needs coordinator has been very thorough in making sure that pupils are only on the register if their needs warrant it. This has made support more focused and manageable, which has resulted in better progress for many of the pupils. The progress for a remaining few is still too slow and the special educational needs coordinator has been proactive in explaining strategies for teachers to use to ensure better outcomes for these pupils. You are expecting teachers and middle leaders to monitor and evaluate the progress of these pupils on a regular basis so that they reach their potential.

- You have worked hard to improve the attendance of pupils within the school and reduce the number who are persistently absent. There has been an effective improvement in overall attendance, which is now in line with national averages. The attendance of a minority of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is still stubbornly low. Leaders are aware of the individual cases and are determined to make sure that these pupils come to school on a regular basis.
- Following the poor outcomes in science in the end-of-year teacher assessments at key stage 1, you have taken various steps to make sure that this does not happen again. The first step has been to refocus the teaching of science so that it is given the same prominence as the other core subjects. The leader of science has monitored the current provision and has taken action which is showing improvements in outcomes and pupil engagement. After-school clubs are provided, too, for those pupils who have a greater interest in science and those subjects associated with it, such as technology, engineering and mathematics, which promote potential careers and qualifications. Having done this, you are aware that there are other subjects in the wider curriculum, such as geography and history, which need improvement also.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle leaders are enabled to provide accountability within their areas so that:
 - the progress of significant groups, such as disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is the same as other pupils from their starting points
 - the progress of pupils who are achieving below expectations is accelerating so that they catch up more quickly
- middle and curriculum leaders monitor subjects rigorously within the wider curriculum so that outcomes are at least as good as those in the core subjects
- the focus on attendance of significant groups, such as disadvantaged pupils and

those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is maintained to ensure that more pupils attend on a regular basis.

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

Yours sincerely

Kathy Maddocks
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, middle leaders, the chair of the trust, the chair of the governing body and a governor, staff and pupils. I had a telephone conversation with the school education partner. I visited lessons for all classes in the school. I looked at the quality of the work in pupils' exercise books. I considered documentary evidence relating to the impact of the school's work, including safeguarding. I took into account 86 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and 84 comments written by parents, plus the 35 responses from staff.