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Mr Duncan De Gruchy  
Headteacher  
Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School  
Jersey Street  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
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Dear Mr De Gruchy

### **Short inspection of Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 30 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 June 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

Although the school has experienced changes in leadership in recent years, the good quality of education has been maintained since the last inspection. Governors have now successfully secured the leadership with your appointment to the position of headteacher.

Since being appointed as the permanent headteacher, you have wasted no time in securing the respect and support of staff, governors, pupils and parents. Governors commented how there has been a 'marked improvement' since your arrival. Staff share your determination and drive for continuous improvement and aspire to provide every pupil with the very best education and care. Parents described how they 'welcome the stability in leadership and the coherency' that you provide. It is clear that staff and governors are confident that under your leadership the school will continue to thrive.

You and your leaders know the school and its pupils extremely well. You have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's many strengths but you also know which areas require improvement. For example, you are aware that pupils' writing skills need to be evident across a broader range of subjects. You also know that you need to continue the focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This will help ensure that pupils are making the very best possible progress, with more achieving greater depth in their reading, writing and mathematics.

Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and have a very deep understanding

of their individual needs. At the time of the last inspection the school was asked to ensure that activities planned met the needs of all pupils. Inspection evidence confirms that teachers plan activities which carefully meet pupils' needs and contribute to their typically strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Parents who submitted comments via the online inspection questionnaire were extremely positive about your school. 'The new headteacher appears to be a perfect fit for the ethos of the school', 'this school has a caring, nurturing atmosphere with effective teachers' and 'there is a good culture in this school where children are supported to grow up with the skills they need to tackle the challenges they face in growing up' are just a few of the many positive comments made by parents.

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to be considered during the day. These included: how the school ensures that pupils are safe and regularly attend school; the effectiveness of leaders in sustaining a good standard of education; how teaching promotes good learning in key stage 1; and the effectiveness of subject leaders in improving pupils' progress. These key lines of enquiry are considered below under 'safeguarding' and 'inspection findings'.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You, your staff and governors ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality. Staff provide a safe and nurturing culture which is palpable throughout the school. As one parent explained, 'The school has a family feel, where children are safe and happy.'

Recruitment and vetting procedures for all staff carefully follow statutory guidance. Staff and governors receive highly effective safeguarding training, on subjects including female genital mutilation, radicalisation and extremism. This training enables staff to notice any concerns quickly and take prompt action with confidence.

Risk assessments are detailed and carefully checked by leaders to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. For example, individual risk assessments are in place for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who need additional support during fire evacuation drills.

Pupils explain that they are happy at school and feel safe. They are confident they can talk to any member of staff if they have any concerns or worries. They receive regular and appropriate guidance on how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils are fully aware of the importance of not providing personal information when using electronic equipment, including laptops and mobile phones.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and your staff are vigilant in ensuring that pupils attend school regularly. You carefully monitor attendance each day and take immediate action if pupils do not arrive at the start of the day. Consequently, attendance is improving and is in line with the national average. Nevertheless, you are not complacent and

continually strive for pupils to be in school every day, irrespective of age or background.

- You and your leadership team are clearly knowledgeable about the progress that pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics. You carefully track each individual pupil and take swift action if progress stalls. For example, you recognised that pupils in Year 2 did not do as well as they could have done in their reading, especially the girls. You have taken rapid action to ensure that this is not repeated. Now they are in Year 3, you have ensured that regular reading activities have been put in place which meet their needs precisely. Current progress information shows that these pupils, especially the girls, are quickly catching up and making strong progress. This was confirmed during the inspection when I listened to girls read. They read with confidence, enjoyment and accuracy – demonstrating a love of reading. They were able to talk about books they had read, referencing preferred authors and styles.
- You consider the professional development of staff a priority. You are outward looking and constantly seek ways in which to share good practice and further develop teachers' skills. Teachers have welcomed the opportunity to visit schools and attend training in both the local cluster of schools and the wider area. This helps to identify what they do well but also what needs to improve. You clearly recognise the need to continue to focus on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure all groups of pupils make the very best possible progress. For example, you know that pupils do not use the writing skills they have learned in their English lessons well enough across other subjects. Nevertheless, current progress information demonstrates that pupils are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in key stage 1 typically make strong progress as a result of good teaching. Teachers are clear about what pupils know, can do and understand and they plan activities which successfully meet pupils' needs. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, which enables them to challenge pupils in their learning. They ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding and deepen their thinking. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils were challenged in their work on inverse operations. The most able pupils were successful in applying their knowledge and skills in a range of problem-solving activities, demonstrating greater depth in this concept.
- You and your leaders check the effectiveness of teaching frequently through a range of activities. These include lesson observations, 'book looks' and pupil progress meetings. Teachers are challenged to ensure that they provide the very best for pupils. Governors also monitor first-hand by attending leadership meetings, progress meetings and class visits.
- The last inspection report highlighted the need for subject leaders to contribute more effectively to the monitoring and evaluation processes in order to bring about improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. This they have done with relish. They are passionate and knowledgeable about the subjects they lead and they support teachers well, especially in English and mathematics. Consequently, teachers are confident and provide pupils with activities which excite, motivate, and challenge – developing their love of learning. However, you

have accurately identified the need to constantly explore ways to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that all pupils make the very best possible progress.

- Improvement plans accurately reflect your self-evaluation. However, planning does not demonstrate with sufficient precision how actions taken will be successful in securing the best possible progress for pupils.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- there is a continuing focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to enable all groups of pupils to make the best possible progress
- pupils' skills in writing are consistently applied across a wider range of subjects
- improvement plans articulate precisely how actions taken will be successful in improving pupils' progress.

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

Jen Southall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I met with you and together we talked about the improvements which have been made since the last inspection. We carried out a learning walk and looked at pupils' work.

I met with your subject leaders in English and mathematics. I also held discussions with members of the governing body, including the chair, and met with an officer from the local authority. I talked to pupils and heard them read.

A wide range of documentation was looked at, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and information relating to pupils' current achievement and progress. I also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements and attendance information. I spoke to parents at the start of the day and also took into account the 26 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and considered the 25 additional comments received via text message from parents.