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Mrs Jennifer Rubel  
Acting headteacher  
Marshfield Church of England Primary School  
Chippenham Road  
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Wiltshire  
SN14 8NY

Dear Mrs Rubel

### **Short inspection of Marshfield Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 4 April 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 September 2012.

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

Under your strong and determined leadership the good quality of education has been maintained since the last inspection. You have ensured that during a period of transition to a new headteacher, who takes up post in September 2017, the school continues to improve and flourish.

Your passion, enthusiasm and energy to ensure pupils receive the very best quality of education and care is demonstrable. You have rapidly gained the utmost respect of staff, pupils and parents. Parents describe how under your leadership there is 'no sense of coasting at all', and how you 'keep building on the foundation of the school'. You and your leadership team work seamlessly together. You share the same vision and aspirations to provide outstanding provision for all pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and have a very deep knowledge and understanding of their individual needs. Teaching assistants play an important role in enabling pupils to access their learning effectively. The dedication and commitment of your team was eloquently summed up in the following description by a parent: 'an ambitious and tenacious team who are cohesive and dynamic, striving for great outcomes'. Consequently, pupils who attend your school receive high-quality teaching, achieve well and make at least good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils receive a rich and varied curriculum which is enhanced by the many extra opportunities you provide such as music, drama, sports and citizenship. Pupils who

attend your school acquire a love of learning and attend school assiduously and regularly. They behave exceptionally well in lessons, during playtimes and at lunchtimes. Staff are strong role models for pupils, as highlighted by a pupil who commented that 'staff respect us so we in turn respect them'. Pupils welcome the chance to take on additional responsibilities in school. They talk with animation about being a member of the school council or their role as a digital leader. These responsibilities provide pupils with excellent experience in important life skills such as democracy and respect.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of education and care their children receive at your school. Comments such as, 'I feel very fortunate that my children attend such an inspiring and caring school', 'it is a lovely, friendly and welcoming school where children thrive' and 'every day I feel proud and grateful to be able to send my children to this school' are typical of the responses received.

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to consider during the day. These included: how the school ensures pupils are safe and attend school regularly; the effectiveness of senior leaders and subject leaders in improving pupils' progress, particularly in reading and writing; and the effectiveness of leaders, including governors, in sustaining an effective standard of education. These key lines of enquiry are considered below under 'safeguarding' and 'inspection findings'.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders, including governors, ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. There is a strong culture of safeguarding which is palpable across the school and a total commitment of staff to protect pupils from all potential risks. You ensure your staff have received the very latest training and guidance. Consequently, staff are highly skilled and have the confidence to take rapid action to keep pupils safe. You work closely with a range of external agencies and take decisive action when concerns arise, minimising risk to pupils.

You and your governors fully understand the significance of recruiting staff safely. Irrespective of their role, you carefully vet staff before they start employment to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

Risk assessments are fully in place for activities within the school and in the local community. For example, thorough risk assessments cover pupils' attendance at the local church to worship. Leaders carefully check the assessments to ensure they remain fit for purpose in keeping pupils safe.

Pupils describe how they feel safe in school and are well looked after. They are confident that a member of staff is always available who will help them address any worries or concerns. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through carefully planned activities, including aspects such as discussions about e-safety. As a result, they fully understand the risks associated with sharing information online

with people they do not know. Parents are confident that their children are kept safe. They speak positively about site security. They welcome the guidance they receive through newsletters and workshops to help keep their children safe, for example when using electronic devices such as tablets and mobile phones.

### **Inspection findings**

- You are an inspirational leader who has high expectations of yourself and your staff. You have quickly and effortlessly made the transition to your role as acting headteacher and have rapidly gained the respect of the school community.
- The previous inspection report highlighted the need to improve the quality of pupils' presentation. You have tackled this with aplomb. Teachers do not accept anything less than the best from their pupils. They teach handwriting consistently across the school with a strong focus on correct pencil grip and letter formation. Pupils rise to the challenge and consequently ensure they present their work neatly and with pride.
- You and your senior leaders carefully track the learning and progress of pupils. You undertake a good range of monitoring activities which includes learning walks, discussing learning with pupils and viewing their work. You provide high-quality staff development to ensure teachers maintain and further develop the knowledge and skills required to provide effective learning for pupils. As a result, teachers are highly skilled and the quality of teaching is good with some excellent practice.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge and careful checking of what pupils know, can do and understand enable them to plan activities which meet pupils' needs precisely. For example, older pupils were engrossed in a reading and writing activity on the 'alethiometer'. They were challenged in their thinking by the probing questioning of the teacher and were able to use the text effectively to delve for and recall information.
- Pupils relish the opportunity to read, and develop impressive reading skills. Pupils read with confidence, accuracy and a deep understanding of the text. They talk with enthusiasm about preferred authors and the type of book they enjoy. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the weekly 'Gruffalo' award, where each class strives to read the most often. It inspires them to read their books frequently at school and at home.
- Pupils make at least good and sometimes excellent progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. This is reflected in the published information which shows how pupils' progress is improving year on year in the early years provision, key stage 1 and key stage 2. However, this strong progress is not consistent across a range of subjects. Pupils' written work in other subjects is not always as high-quality as in their English.
- Governors are effective. They have a good range of skills and expertise and provide strong support and challenge to leaders. They have a deep understanding of the many strengths of the school and are constantly seeking ways for it to improve further and become outstanding. However, records of their meetings do not clearly demonstrate how the impact of their challenge is driving forward improvements effectively and further raising pupil outcomes.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' written work in other subjects is of the consistently high quality displayed in their work in English
- governors' records demonstrate more precisely the impact of their challenge to leaders in raising pupils' outcomes.

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

Yours sincerely

Jen Southall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I met with you and your acting deputy headteacher. Together, we talked about the improvements which have been made since the last inspection. We carried out a 'learning walk' through classes. I also held discussions with three governors, including the chair of the governing body, met with subject leaders and held a telephone conversation with an officer from the local authority. I talked informally to pupils and heard them read.

I looked at a wide range of documentation, 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 81 responses to the online survey 'Parent View' and considered 67 additional text messages received from parents. I also evaluated the 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.