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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Lesley Brookbanks  
Headteacher  
Lancaster Christ Church Church of England Primary School  
Highfield  
Derwent Road  
Lancaster  
Lancashire  
LA1 3ES

Dear Mrs Brookbanks

### **Short inspection of Lancaster Christ Church Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 19 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 December 2012.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You lead the school very effectively, you are ambitious for every child in your care and you are held in high regard by both parents and staff alike. One parent commented that 'Mrs Brookbanks is an excellent headteacher, because she commands the respect of pupils, whilst remaining approachable to parents.'

Your evaluation of the school's position is honest and accurate. The leadership team and governors are aware of the school's strengths and act decisively to improve areas of weakness. For example, at the time of the last inspection the school was asked to improve the teaching of phonics. There has been a marked improvement in the teaching of early reading techniques and as a result all pupils in Year 1 achieved the standard expected in the phonics screening check in 2016.

Pupils' behaviour continues to be outstanding. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and are keen to show it off to visitors. They are adamant that everyone would always be welcome in their school, that everyone is tolerant of each other and that they all get along well.

Teaching over time is good and this results in good outcomes. Teachers have raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve, since the introduction of the new

curriculum in 2014. Consequently, pupils make good progress and achieve well, particularly in reading and mathematics.

Children get off to a good start in early years. Parents are particularly appreciative of the early years leader, as he ensures that children settle quickly into school life and make good progress.

The curriculum is well designed and offers a wide range of exciting experiences. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the range of activities and events they are offered. For example, pupils in Year 5 enjoyed a trip to the zoo, when studying the rainforest. Infant pupils hatched eggs in the shared area, while Year 2 learned about castles during a trip to Lancaster Castle.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding is effective. You have ensured that robust procedures are in place to ensure that all pupils are kept safe and that you and the governing body take your safeguarding role very seriously, ensuring that every member of staff is appropriately trained and aware of their duties to safeguard pupils. Staff know what to do if they are concerned about a child and your in-depth knowledge of each family ensures that pupils get valuable support if it is needed.

All staff are effectively checked before they start working in school and they are given regular safeguarding updates in line with government guidance. Staff are acutely aware of the need to keep pupils safe on the school site and as a result the supervision of pupils is good.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They understand that there is someone they can talk to if they have a problem and they are sure that staff will help them. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, they say bullying in school is extremely rare and that if it were to occur it would be dealt with swiftly by you and your staff. Pupils are taught how to keep safe on the internet. I was impressed that they could talk about 'think before you click' and that Years 4, 5 and 6 had attended a safer internet workshop. Younger pupils explained that they would always tell someone if something on the internet made them feel uncomfortable.

### **Inspection findings**

- You have been determined to improve standards in writing so that more pupils learn to write at the standard expected for their age. Pupils are given opportunity to write at length and in a variety of styles each week and teachers in almost all classes have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils are keen to write and when they are given good advice they know exactly how to improve their work.
- During their time in school, and in almost all years, pupils are now making rapid progress in writing. Generally, work is well presented, spelling is good and pupils write interesting and engaging pieces of work. A greater number of pupils are now on track to achieve the standard expected for their age in 2017.

- Teaching over time results in pupils' good progress in writing. However, the impact of current teaching is not as effective in all year groups. At times, pupils' progress is not as rapid where there are inconsistencies in how writing is taught. In addition, pupils are not always given clear guidance on how to do their best writing.
- You and other senior leaders are aware that the achievement of disadvantaged pupils has not been as good as other pupils nationally. You have acted quickly to identify these pupils and track their performance across the curriculum. You offer a range of provision, including social, emotional and mental health support as well as academic support, for these pupils. You are aware of the need to draw up a strategic plan to ensure that you can accurately measure the impact of all the support you offer. You are also aware of the need to publish this strategy on your website.
- As a result of effective tracking and good teaching, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is improving and more of them are working at the level expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You and your staff have worked hard in the last year to improve attendance, and in particular the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Unfortunately, a very small number of these pupils have had extended stays in hospital. However, this apart, the attendance of this group of pupils is improving overall.
- Pupils are excited to come to school regularly because they are offered so many interesting opportunities to learn. They enjoy receiving certificates for good attendance and if attendance of some pupils does drop, you ensure that parents know the consequences of missing time in school. Therefore, attendance is currently above the national average.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very successful. The multi-faith week allows all pupils to gain an understanding of a different faith and culture to their own. Each class visits a place of worship, including a synagogue, a gurdwara, a Hindu temple and a mosque. Moreover, pupils study a range of art forms and taste food from different parts of the world.
- Pupils are given opportunities to take part in a number of cultural activities. These include trips to local museums and galleries and the opportunity to be part of the school's highly successful 'harmony choir'.
- Pupils make a contribution to their wider community in a range of ways. Recently pupils have raised money for flood victims in Madagascar and have started a Fairtrade tuck shop. Locally, they have visited care homes and hosted children from Chernobyl. These experiences mean that they demonstrate understanding, tolerance and respect for those who are less fortunate.
- British values are promoted well. In particular, pupils have a good understanding of democracy. Your local MP visits school every year to tell the pupils about the workings of parliament and she announces the result of school council elections. A local councillor visits school with a ballot box and ballot papers to explain how a voting system works. In addition, some older pupils take part in the local youth

parliament.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to closely check the quality of children's writing so that progress in all year groups is strong.
- close monitoring of the pupil premium grant continues to have an impact on improved achievement for disadvantaged pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Jackson  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and other members of staff, including the deputy headteacher. I also met with members of the governing body. I had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I met with a group of pupils and spoke to pupils in class.

I took account of responses to the online questionnaires for pupils, parents and staff. I visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning and looked at their work in books. I reviewed information about pupils' progress and attainment and the curriculum. I scrutinised the school's self-evaluation document and action plans and looked at safeguarding, including evaluating the impact of the school's procedures and policies to keep pupils safe.