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Mr Andrew Symonds
Headteacher
Richard Taylor Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mr Symonds

Short inspection of Richard Taylor Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 25 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 your predecessor 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. Your inspirational and inclusive leadership has kindled a strong sense of teamwork and aspiration among other leaders, governors and staff. They feel privileged to work at Richard Taylor. Everyone is working hard to support you in your continued drive to ensure that all pupils thrive during their time in school and achieve the best possible outcomes by the time they leave. You found, following the 2016 national assessments, there was still work to do to ensure that more pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieved a greater depth of learning, particularly in mathematics in key stage 1. Actions that you and your team are taking are tackling these issues effectively.

Astute and accurate evaluation of the school's work means that you, your deputy and governors are very clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Specific areas that I had chosen to focus upon during my visit were already identified in your written evaluations and in your school improvement plans. This demonstrates your insightful understanding of the school's performance and aided me in my investigations during the inspection.

The clear improvement priorities you have set this year are checked carefully by governors for their impact on the school's improvement. Such an emphasis on improvement has ensured that weaker areas identified at the last inspection have been tackled effectively. For example, the resolute drive to continue to improve the quality of teaching is making its mark. Robust arrangements to manage the performance of staff along with high-quality training and a strong commitment from

staff have ensured that any weaknesses in teaching are quickly tackled. You and your deputy's monitoring of learning is meticulous and includes regular opportunities for pupils to provide their views on the quality of their experiences. Reviews of learning celebrate teachers' strengths and provide them with specific 'next steps' to help them hone their skills further.

You and your deputy have developed many aspects of subject leadership successfully since the last inspection. High-quality training and support, strong networks and the sharing of good practice with other specialists in the multi-academy trust have built subject leaders' skills and competencies well. Their subject action plans are crisp and clear and are rigorously monitored for their impact. Greater opportunities for subject leaders to check the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility, alongside the other monitoring activities they carry out, will improve their effectiveness even further.

The rich and varied curriculum is enhanced through many interesting activities within and beyond the school day. It excites and enthuses pupils. Together with worship, religious education and the personal, social and health curriculum, it contributes to pupils' admirable spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assessment of the wider curriculum is not as strong as that for English and mathematics. For example, your deputy has identified rightly the need to improve aspects of assessment and provision in science.

The school lives out its Christian and British values with integrity and fervour. There is a tangible sense of community, care, respect of, and value for, others as soon as you enter the school and as pupils and staff carry out their daily work. The nine values chosen by pupils (friendship, trust, respect, determination, sportsmanship, forgiveness, peace, responsibility and service) lie at the heart of the very successful development of pupils' personal qualities. These values also contribute well to pupils' roles as active citizens in the school and the wider community. Charity work, particularly pupils' Fairtrade work, is notable. It also promotes pupils' understanding of moral, ethical, cultural and religious issues in the world community. Parents, staff and pupils are very positive about the care, support and education that is provided.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, staff and governors are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe in school and are well-prepared to manage risks that they may face in their lives. Pupils who spoke with me are adamant that they feel safe, are taught well about how to stay safe and that they can turn to any adult if they have a worry or a concern. Safeguarding and child protection training for all staff is regular and comprehensive. Staff speak assuredly about the actions they would take should they identify any safeguarding concerns. Records you keep are detailed and of high quality. Referrals to other agencies where required are prompt and followed up rigorously. As designated lead you have a very thorough understanding of pupils at risk and whose circumstances make them vulnerable. You work closely with staff in school, with early help teams in the local authority to secure timely support for families in times of crisis or great need. Procedures to recruit new staff are rigorous. Governors trained well in staff recruitment add rigour to the appointment procedures.

Inspection findings

- Aply supported by your deputy, you are driving improvement in weaker areas and sustaining and building on previous strengths effectively. Parents, staff and pupils recognise and value the way you lead the school. Pupils are pleased that you are so approachable. The staff, and virtually all of the parent survey responses, are highly positive. One member of staff's views represented many when reporting 'Our headteacher and deputy head are fantastic. Everyone is respected, listened to and pulls together brilliantly. It's such a special place to be a part of and I feel very lucky to be part of such a great team.' This sums up the atmosphere in school and the integrity with which you carry out your work.
- You and other leaders are honest in your evaluation of the school's impact. You know that there is still more to do to ensure that all pupils achieve equally well from their starting points. Regular reviews of pupils' learning mean leaders are aware of any pupil or group of pupils at risk of underachieving. Improved teaching includes carefully planned interventions by teachers in class, or small-group work by highly trained teaching assistants. Such work is helping to diminish the previous differences between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in school. For example, current assessments show that disadvantaged pupils are making much stronger progress in English and mathematics this year.
- Assessment of pupils' progress in English and mathematics is strong. You know there is more to do to harmonise assessment across the broader curriculum and to develop the science curriculum further to enable more hands-on scientific enquiry. You know that greater opportunities for subject leaders to monitor how their subject is being taught by teachers across the school will improve their skills in assessing the quality of learning in their subject. It will also contribute to the needed improvements in the assessment of pupils' progress in the broader curriculum. You have plans in place to tackle these issues.
- Significant work has been undertaken to improve the outdoor provision in the early years. Vibrant indoor and outdoor provision, good-quality teaching, care and support have all helped to increase the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception. This has improved from below the national average in 2014 to above in 2016. Children thrive in their learning and play and are now prepared well for the rigours of key stage 1.
- Real strengths in the school include the high-quality relationships developed between adults and pupils and the care and support that pupils afford each other. Pupils are interested and willing to learn. They speak positively about their learning and the challenging personal targets they have to meet. They say they are happy in this friendly school. This can be seen in pupils' above-average attendance rates. Attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have improved due to actions taken. They are now similar to the national average for primary schools.
- There is a good mix of expertise and experience within the governing body. New governors are quickly welcomed into the fold and supported to develop their skills. Governors are ambitious for the school, they visit regularly and strive to improve their effectiveness through regular training. Opportunities for chairs of

the governing bodies from each of the schools in the multi-academy trust enable them to share good practice and learn from each other. Consequently, governors fulfil their statutory duties and are developing stronger skills in holding you and other leaders robustly to account for the impact of the school's work.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- procedures to assess pupils' progress in the broader curriculum are as effective as those for English and mathematics
- opportunities for pupils to experience and learn from hands-on scientific enquiry are developed more consistently and progressively across the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Margaret Farrow
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and the deputy headteacher to discuss the impact of the actions you are taking to continue to improve the school and to safeguard pupils. We observed learning together in three classes and looked at pupils' workbooks and talked to pupils about their learning. I also talked to pupils at breaktime. I held a meeting with four representatives of the governing body, one of whom was a director of the multi-academy trust. I also met with a group of staff. I spoke to your school's local authority education development adviser on the telephone. I took account of the 29 responses to the Ofsted staff survey and the 55 responses to Ofsted's parent survey, Parent View. I also took account of the 34 written responses in this survey and the views of the parents and grandparents I spoke to at the end of the day. I scrutinised a number of documents, including a range of safeguarding documents, the school's written evaluation of its work and the school improvement and subject plans. I also reviewed recent headteacher's reports to governors and minutes from recent governing body meetings.