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Mrs Lorraine Woollven  
Headteacher  
Churchill Church of England Primary School  
Pudding Pie Lane  
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Bristol  
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Dear Mrs Woollven

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

Following my visit to the school on 11 May 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 April 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment you have led with determination and rigour. There has been considerable change to leadership, staffing and governance since the previous inspection.

You have a clear vision for the school which is shared by your deputy headteacher and middle leaders. This, combined with a strong drive for improvement, has ensured that the school has improved rapidly following a dip in its performance. Consequently, teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' progress are typically good.

Parents are very supportive of the school. Almost every parent who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, reported that they would recommend it. They believe the school to be well led and managed, and almost all say that children make good progress.

You are tenacious in your leadership approach. You hold teachers to account well. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have increased. As a result, pupils are getting the good quality-teaching and support they need so that they make good progress and any prior underachievement is tackled effectively.

At the previous inspection you were asked to raise the level of challenge to ensure pupils made the best possible progress. The school's work in this regard is mostly

effective. This is a key reason why pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 2 has been consistently high in reading, writing and mathematics for a number of years. The proportion of pupils exceeding the standards expected nationally is also consistently above the national average. You are accurate in your evaluation that pupils do well at your school. However, you also identify that there is still room to challenge middle-attaining pupils and the most able pupils across the school even more so that a larger proportion of these pupils exceed the standards expected nationally.

You were also asked to develop teachers' assessment strategies to check pupils' understanding and learning. Teachers have developed precise ways to check pupils' understanding. Teachers routinely provide pupils with detailed feedback so they know how to make improvements to their work. The recent focus on enabling pupils to gain independence in editing and improving their work is paying dividends in this respect.

Pupils speak positively of the education they receive. Pupils look out for one another. They enjoy the opportunities on offer, for example science workshops at the local secondary school. Pupils behave well in lessons. As a result of your school-wide 'learning to learn' initiative pupils are gaining greater resilience to tackle the challenges set for them with independence and determination to do their best.

Leaders including governors are working on the right aspects for improvement. However, further work is required so that teachers provide the level of challenge to enable every group of pupils to make equally strong progress from their different starting points.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture to safeguard pupils at the school. Those responsible for leading safeguarding are vigilant in all aspects of their work. Since your arrival you have strengthened the recording systems to log any concerns. These are now robust. You have responded promptly to local authority safeguarding audits. As a result, policies, procedures and training relating to safeguarding meet requirements and are up to date with current legislation. You work effectively with external agencies to ensure that everything is being done to safeguard children and minimise risk. Your referrals are timely and consistently followed up.

You have ensured that staff know how to effectively use and apply their training within their daily routines and work. Staff confirm that systems to communicate any safeguarding concerns are significantly strengthened this year.

Governors conduct regular compliance visits to ensure that the school's vetting checks and safeguarding procedures are consistently applied. However, governors have been slow to ensure that the current safeguarding policy, approved in October 2016, is on the school's website for parents to view. This was rectified during the inspection.

Pupils say they feel safe, including online. Pupils spoken to on inspection were unanimous in their view that they could raise concerns, however small, with school staff. Pupils have confidence that any concerns are quickly acted on and sorted out.

### **Inspection findings**

To ascertain that the school remained good, a key line of enquiry focused on pupils' progress in mathematics, including in the early years. Outcomes at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are well above average. However, middle-attaining pupils' progress was not as strong as the school aspires and this resulted in a lower than average progress score across key stage 2 in 2016.

- The school's strategy to further strengthen the teaching of mathematics is proving effective. As a result, pupils have greater fluency and strong skills in calculation and number. Teaching is also successfully incorporating a greater focus on problem solving and reasoning in many year groups. This is enabling these pupils to use and apply their mathematics with greater confidence.
- This improvement, however, is recent and some inconsistencies remain. Consequently, the progress for a minority of middle-attaining pupils in lower key stage 2 is not yet rapid. This is because pupils are not presented with challenging work quickly enough or they do not use and apply their skills to reason in mathematics. This hampers the progress that this group of pupils make.
- In the early years there is a key focus on developing children's knowledge and understanding of number, including simple number problems. Teacher-directed work builds precisely on what children can already do. Consequently, in these sessions children make good and often rapid progress. Children who enter the school with knowledge and skills above their age are not held back. For example, bespoke learning opportunities help them deepen their understanding of sharing groups of objects into two and three sets. However, progress is not as strong for a small minority of children with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. When their provision is not closely matched to their needs, children's concentration can decrease and their progress falters.

My second line of enquiry was about how well leaders are driving improvement at the school so that pupils' achievement and attendance continues to rise.

- There is a robust and coordinated response from leaders at all levels to raise pupils' achievement even further. Leaders are quick to tackle any weaknesses in teaching and learning affecting the progress of specific groups of pupils. You provide staff with timely feedback so that they know what it is they need to improve. Your leadership strategy to strengthen teaching even further is making a tangible difference across the school. As a result, pupils' achievement continues to rise. However, you accurately identify that middle leaders' checks do not yet take full account of pupils' prior attainment.
- Attendance is consistently good in every class. Absence continues to reduce as a

result of vigilant and robust leadership checks. Attendance has been above the national average for the last two years. Very few pupils are persistently absent and when they are, the reasons for this are fully accounted for.

- Increasingly governors hold the school to account well, for example tracking the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils on improving pupils' outcomes. They have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and aspects that require work. Governors do not shy away from asking difficult questions and now challenge school leaders proficiently.
- Governors have undertaken a review of policies and the school website. The groundwork is complete and policies and statutory information up to date. However, at the time of my visit some aspects did not appear on the school's website. Governors have already acted swiftly to address this. However, they know they need to ensure compliance so that parents have all statutory information at their fingertips should they need it.

Another aspect I looked at was the impact of leaders' strategy to improve writing in the school, including in the early years. This is because in 2016, the proportion of pupils at key stage 1 who met expected standards was well above the national average but none of these pupils reached the highest standards.

- Leaders' actions are increasingly effective in ensuring that pupils write with greater stamina and precision. As a result of staff training, pupils across the school now edit and improve their work more effectively and this enhances the structure of their writing and accuracy of spelling. Pupils write for a range of purposes. However, there are occasions when the teaching of writing is not consistently challenging enough for the most able pupils. These pupils do not get enough exposure to work at the highest level, particularly when applying their skills across the wider curriculum. Too few boys and pupils who are disadvantaged exceed expected standards in writing.
- In the early years, most children are keen to write. The proportion of children reaching the early learning goal in writing has been above or in line with that achieved nationally for the last three years. You have been working on accelerating the progress for the most able children. This aspect is effective. These children make the most of the many writing opportunities on offer in Reception. They can write a number of sentences independently including capital letters and full stops. As a result, these children are making swift progress. However, for a small minority of low-attaining pupils their letter formation is not yet accurate and this limits their fluency.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- checks on pupils' progress are measured from their starting points so that middle-ability and most-able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, apply their writing skills across the curriculum with greater precision and a larger proportion also exceed the expected standards in writing
- teachers use their assessments precisely to ensure that work builds on what pupils already know, so that a greater proportion of middle-attaining pupils meet and exceed expected standards in mathematics
- children in the early years who enter the school with skills and knowledge below that typical for their age catch up rapidly so that their letter formation is accurate when writing independently and they can use their number knowledge to solve simple problems.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Carrington  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I spoke to you, senior and middle leaders, and a group of governors. I also had a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority. I made visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning and to scrutinise their work. I talked with a group of pupils to gather their views of the school.

I considered a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation, development plans, school performance information, attendance, behaviour and safeguarding documentation.

In addition, I took account of 58 responses to the Parent View online survey and free-text messaging service. I gathered the views of staff throughout the inspection.