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Mrs Alison Whittaker  
Headteacher  
South Kilvington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Whittaker

### **Short inspection of South Kilvington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 17 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 February 2012.

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

You and your team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. South Kilvington Church of England Primary School is an inclusive school that welcomes all, going the extra mile to meet the needs of everyone, including the most vulnerable. Parents said, 'Everyone works hard and goes above and beyond for the children' and 'We have found it to be a very friendly and caring school.'

You ensure that pupils experience a stimulating, broad and balanced curriculum. Physical education (PE) and music are particular strengths. Both parents and pupils value the many opportunities the school provides for pupils to learn to play musical instruments, sing in the choir, and participate in a variety of sports clubs and competitions.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well developed. You and the governing body ensure that the school's Christian values inform everything the school does. Pupils have a good knowledge about major world faiths and learn about cultural differences. Older pupils in particular are developing a secure understanding of principles such as equality and democracy. However, you recognise that pupils' understanding about gender diversity is less well developed.

At the last inspection, inspectors identified two areas for improvement. The first was

to raise attainment and accelerate progress further in writing and mathematics. In the few years following the inspection, progress in mathematics was variable and results in 2016 were disappointing. However, as the mathematics leader, you are on top of this and pupils throughout the school, including the most able, are now making good progress in mathematics. Pupils' progress in writing by the end of key stage 2 has been consistently good, but less so in key stage 1. Writing remains an area for improvement in Years 1 and 2, especially for the most able. In addition, the most able children in the early years do not do as well in writing as in other subjects.

The second area for improvement was to develop the effectiveness of subject leaders. A great deal of work was done to improve this, but the departure of a number of staff means that your small school has lost the developing talent and has had to start again with less experienced teachers. Recently, there are some examples of very effective subject leadership that has made a positive difference to pupils' outcomes, for example in spelling and in PE. However, a few leaders are still early in their development and have yet to make a significant difference to pupils' outcomes.

Last year, you and governors took action to strengthen governance further. Minutes of meetings show that governors do not miss a trick but challenge leaders well. Governors are exceptionally well organised, each having a specific responsibility and checking tasks that they carry out throughout the year. This includes making regular checks on safeguarding. Governors listen to what parents and pupils have to say and respond to their views.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All adults are well trained and up to date with what their duties are. For example, adults know how to spot any changes in pupils' behaviour that could indicate they may be experiencing abuse or at risk. Records of concerns are detailed and thorough, and you seek advice or make referrals to the local authority where appropriate.

Bullying is rare. The vast majority of pupils are satisfied that adults deal with incidents effectively. You keep systematic records of any incidents and watch for any patterns in behaviour that may cause concern.

My scrutiny of the central record of staff vetting revealed an omission that you took urgent action to resolve. The record is otherwise detailed and accurate, reflecting the proper checks that have been carried out to make sure that adults can be considered safe to work with children.

### **Inspection findings**

- Results in the 2016 key stage 2 tougher mathematics test were disappointing. Too few pupils achieved the expected standard and none reached a high standard. Furthermore, no pupils achieved greater depth in their mathematics learning in Year 2 last year either. Progress since the last inspection has been variable. However, pupils across the school are now making good progress and increasing proportions of pupils are on track to reach a high standard. This is because, under your direct leadership, teachers are making better use of assessment information so know exactly how they need to challenge pupils to improve. Teachers' subject knowledge has greatly improved. I observed pupils of all abilities persevering with tricky mathematics problems and this strong challenge was evident in the pupils' workbooks.
- I especially wanted to see how pupils were doing in their writing, as this was an area for development inspectors identified at the last inspection. Furthermore, achievement in writing in key stage 1 was weak last year, especially for boys. Writing at key stage 1 remains an area for improvement, but has improved at key stage 2 where pupils make good progress. Pupils are developing greater accuracy in their writing in Year 2 but their ability to construct sentences that are more interesting is weaker, including for the most able pupils. Pupils in Year 1 do not make the progress of which they are capable because expectations of pupils are not as high as in mathematics for example.
- Around half the children in Reception last year exceeded the early learning goals in a number of areas, including in mathematics. However, no children have exceeded the end-of-year goals in writing in the last two years, despite doing so in speaking, listening, understanding and reading. This accentuates the issue in writing at key stage 1 because children are not as well prepared to make a good start as they should be.
- Attendance is improving so that it is now above the national average for 2016. The rates of persistent absence (missing school at least one day a fortnight) have fallen, especially for disadvantaged pupils. This is, in part, due to effective spending of the pupil premium, particularly the funding of a breakfast club service and involvement of a local authority support worker. A fifth of pupils have 100% attendance this year to date – a real achievement, which reflects pupils' enthusiasm for school.
- Development of subject leaders has been hampered by high staff turnover. The literacy subject leader has taken effective action to improve spelling across the school and the PE subject leader has made effective use of government funding for PE and sports. Middle leaders access support from within the local cluster of schools to improve their knowledge, and you have coached and supported leaders in their duties. However, some are still early in their development and do not act on the information they gather from the checks they make.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- more children in the Reception Year exceed the early learning goal in writing
- the teaching of writing at key stage 1 improves, especially for boys and the most able pupils, so that more are working at greater depth
- middle leaders continue to develop their skills so that they can take on more responsibility, and so that leaders make better use of the information they gather to improve teaching and pupils' progress
- pupils develop a better understanding of gender diversity.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of York, 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

Philip Riozzi  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

Together we visited each class to observe teaching and its impact on learning. We looked at a number of pupils' workbooks together and discussed various aspects of the school's work throughout the inspection. I met with five members of the governing body, most of the teachers, and a representative from the local authority. I questioned a few adults about safeguarding and examined safeguarding records. I also looked at a range of other documents, including the school's self-evaluation document, the school development plan and leaders' monitoring notes. I examined the most up-to-date school assessment information. I held discussions with groups of pupils to find out what it is like to be a pupil at the school. Finally, I considered 24 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, 42 responses to the pupil questionnaire and eight responses to the staff questionnaire.